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NEIL McDONALD

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Neil McDonald

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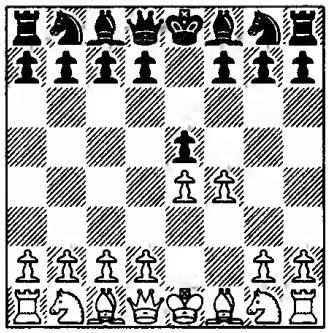

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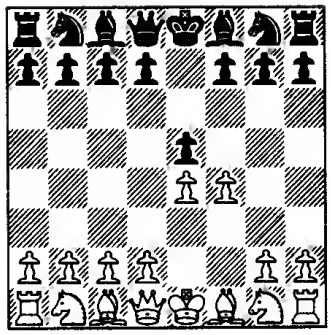
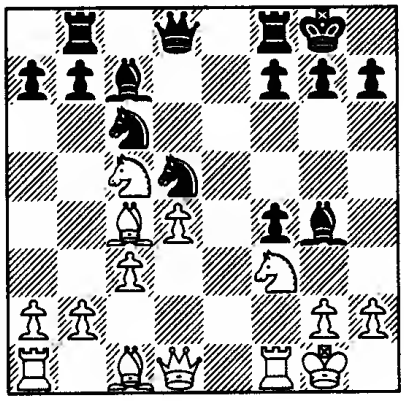
INTRODUCTION



In the 19th century the art of defence was little understood. Hence, enterprising but unsound gambits often enjoyed great success. In those halcyon days for the King's Gambit, boldness and attacking flair were more important than rigorous analytical exactitude. The King's Gambit proved the perfect weapon for the romantic player: White would push aside the black e-pawn with 2 f4! and then overrun the centre, aiming to launch a rapid attack and slay the black pieces in their beds.

Nowadays, after a century of improvements in technique and the accumulation of theory by trial and error, things are somewhat different. Black players have learnt how to defend and any impetuous lunge by the white pieces will be beaten off with terrible losses to the attacker.

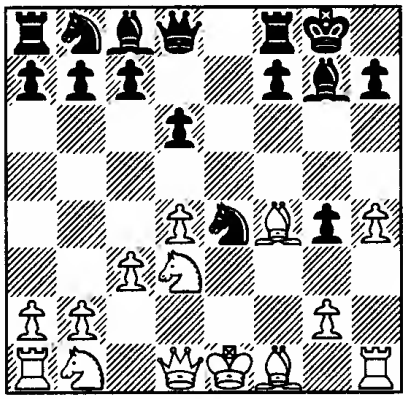
Even in the King's Gambit, therefore, White is no longer trying to attack at all costs. He has had to adapt his approach and look for moves with a solid positional foundation, just as he does in other openings. As often as not, his strategy consists of stifling Black's activity and then winning in an endgame thanks to his superior pawn structure. Here is an example of this in action.



This position is taken from the game Illescas-Nunn, which is given in the notes to Game 45 in Chapter 7. White has the better pawn structure (four against two on the queenside) and any endgame should be very good for him. On the other hand, Black has dynamic middlegame chances, as all his pieces are very active. White found

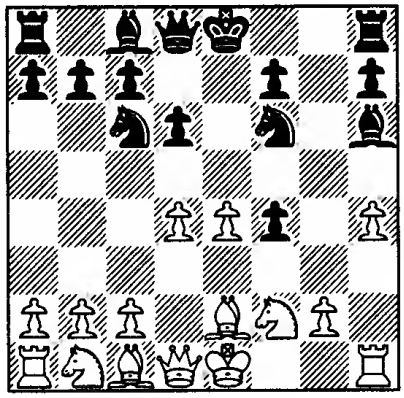
a way to force an endgame here with 13 ♕e1! ♖e8 14 ♕h4! ♕xh4 (more or less forced) 15 ♘xh4. There followed 15...♘e3 16 ♗xe3 ♖xe3 17 ♖ae1 ♖xe1 18 ♖xe1 and White's queenside pawns were much more valuable than Black's ineffectual clump on the kingside. Furthermore, Black has not the slightest counterplay. It is no surprise that White won after another 22 moves.

There was no brilliant sacrificial attack in this game, yet White succeeded in defeating a top-class grandmaster. Here is another example, taken from Game 15 in Chapter 2.



Despite the fact that he is a pawn down, White's chances would be no worse in an endgame. After all, he has control of the excellent f4-square and could aim to exploit the holes in the black kingside, which is looking disjointed. However, as Tartakower remarked 'before the endgame the gods have placed the middlegame'. White is behind in development and in the game Black exploited this to launch an attack on the white king after 10 ♘d2 ♖e8 11 ♘xe4 ♖xe4+ 12 ♔f2 c5! etc., when White was soon overwhelmed.

This conflict between Black's activity and White's better structure is central to the modern approach to the King's Gambit.



This position was reached in Short-Shirov, Madrid 1997, after White's ninth move (see Chapter 2, Game 8). White has established the ideal pawn centre, while Black has doubled f-pawns. Therefore, statically speaking, White is better. However, Shirov has correctly judged that his active pieces are more important than White's superior pawn structure. Black has a lead in development and can use this to demolish the white centre. The game continued 9...♕e7! 10 ♘c3 ♗d7 11 ♗f3 0-0-0 12 a3?! ♘xe4! and White's proud centre was ruined, as 13 ♗xe4 f5 regains the piece with advantage. Shirov quickly followed up this positional breakthrough with a decisive attack. The time factor was of crucial importance here: in the 'arms race' to bring up the reserves White lagged too far behind.

So what is Black's best defence to the King's Gambit? Three general approaches are possible:

a) take the pawn and hold on to it, at least temporarily, with ...g7-g5.

b) play ...d7-d5 to counterattack.

c) decline the pawn in quiet fashion.

Of these options, the last one is the least promising. White shouldn't be allowed to carry out such a key strategical advance as f2-f4 without encountering some form of resistance. Black normally ends up in a slightly inferior, though solid, position. Nevertheless, undemonstrative responses remain popular, mainly for practical reasons: there is less theory to learn than in the main line.

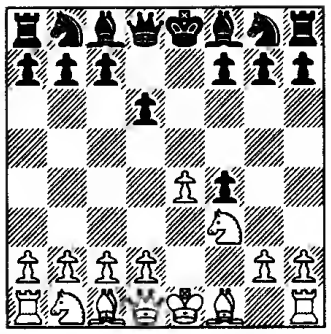
Option b) is under a cloud at the moment. Although defences based on ...d7-d5 allow Black free and rapid development of his pieces, often his inferior pawn structure comes to haunt him later in the game.

That leaves option a), 2...exf4. This is undoubtedly the most challenging move after which play becomes highly complex. As will be seen in Chapters 1 and 2, White has no clear theoretical route to an advantage after 2...exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 or 3...g5, while the variations in Chapter 3 have a poor standing for White. Black should therefore bravely snatch the f-pawn.

However, one should not forget the Bishop's Gambit 3 ♗c4. Fischer favoured this move and at the time of writing it has been successfully adopted by Short and Ivanchuk (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, when I told David Bronstein I was writing a book on the King's Gambit, he replied 'You want to play the King's Gambit? Well, Black can draw after 3 ♘f3. Play 3 ♗c4 if you want to win!' However, as a word of warning we should remember the words of a great World Champion who grew up in the glorious age of the King's Gambit: 'By what right does White, in an absolutely even position, such as after move one, when both sides have advanced 1 e4, sacrifice a pawn, whose recapture is quite uncertain, and open up his kingside to attack? And then follow up this policy by leaving the check of the black queen open? None whatever!' Emanuel Lasker, *Common Sense In Chess*, 1896. A hundred years on, the jury is still out!

Neil McDonald
February 1998

CHAPTER ONE



Fischer Defence (3 ♘f3 d6)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6

'This loss (against Spassky at Mar Del Plata 1960) spurred me to look for a "refutation" of the King's Gambit ... the right move is 3...d6!' - Bobby Fischer, *My Sixty Memorable Games*.

It is ironic that Fischer, who hardly ever played 1...e5 as Black and only adopted the King's Gambit in a handful of games (always with 3 ♗c4), should have discovered one of Black's most effective defences. Or perhaps we should say rediscovered, as 3...d6 was advocated by Stamma way back in 1745, but subsequently ignored. This neglect is puzzling. Why wasn't the strength of 3...d6 appreciated in the heyday of the King's Gambit by Anderssen, Morphy and others? We can either conclude that even in the field of 'romantic' chess modern players are way ahead of the old masters, or point to the creativity of a genius able to find new ideas in familiar settings. After all, who would look for an improvement on move *three* of any opening?

The idea behind 3...d6 is simple. In essence, Black wants a Kieseritzky Gambit (Chapter 2) without allowing White to play ♘e5. If after 4 d4 g5 White plays 5 ♗c4, Black can enter the Hanstein Gambit with 5...♗g7 (or the Philidor after a subsequent 6 h4 h6). The Hanstein seems favourable for Black since he has a very solid kingside pawn structure. It is better for White to strike at the black pawn structure immediately with 5 h4!, as he also does in the Kieseritzky. Although after 5...g4 6 ♘g1, White's knight has been forced to undevelop itself, Black has had to disrupt his kingside structure with ...g5-g4. The strange looking position after 6 ♘g1 is the subject of Games 1-4, while 6 ♘g5 is seen in Game 5.

Instead of 4 d4, White can try 4 ♗c4, when Black responds 4...h6, hoping for 5 d4 g5 etc., when he reaches the favourable Hanstein. However, White can try to cross Black's plans with either 5 d3 (Game 6) or 5 h4 (Game 7).

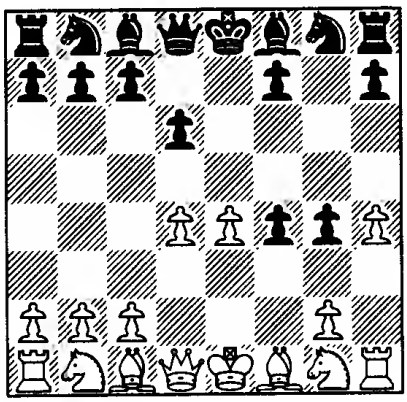
Game 1
Short-Akopian
Madrid 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 h4!

The best move. White undermines the black pawn structure before Black has the chance of solidifying it with ...h7-h6 and ...♗g7. The resulting position may or may not be good for White, but one thing is clear: if he delays even a move, e.g. with 5 ♗c4, then Black will definitely have good chances after 5...♗g7 6 h4 h6 etc. (see Chapter 3, Games 19 and 20).

5...g4 6 ♘g1

The Allgaier-related 6 ♘g5?! is examined in Game 5.



6...♗h6

If Black's last move was forced, here he is spoilt for choice. Alternatives include 6...♕f6 (Game 3, which may transpose to the present game) and 6...f5 (Game 4). Two other moves should also be mentioned:

a) 6...f3. This was popular once, but perhaps Black has been frightened off by the move 7 ♗g5! This is one of the many new ideas that Gallagher pioneered and then publicised in his *Winning with the King's Gambit*. After 7...♗e7 8 ♕d2 h6 (8...f6 9 ♗h6! ♘xh6 10 ♕xh6 was good for White in Gallagher-Bode, Bad Wörishofen 1991) 9 ♗xe7 fxg2 (Black has to interpose this move as 9...♘xe7 10 gxf3 is bad for him) 10 ♗xg2 ♘xe7 11 ♘c3 ♘g6 12 ♕f2 White had good compensation for the pawn in Gallagher-Ziatdinov, Lenk 1991. We have the typical disjointed black kingside to contrast with White's solid centre.

b) 6...♘f6. Instead of defending the f4-pawn, Black counterattacks against the e4-pawn. After 7 ♗xf4 ♘xe4 8 ♗d3 d5 (Black tried to make do without pawn moves in Hebden-Borm, Orange 1987, but was in deep trouble after 8...♕e7 9 ♘e2 ♗g7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♗xe4! ♕xe4 12 ♘bc3 ♕c6 13 ♕d2 d5 [now he has to move a pawn to prevent 14 ♗h6] 14 ♘g3 etc. Another way to bolster the knight is 8...f5, but White had a good endgame after 9 ♘e2 ♗g7 10 ♗xe4 fxe4 11 ♗g5 ♗f6 12 ♘bc3 ♗xg5 13 hxg5 ♕xg5 14 ♘xe4 ♕e3 15 ♘f6+ ♔d8 16 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 17 ♔xd2 ♘c6 18 ♖af1 ♘e7 19 ♖xh7 etc. in Hebden-Psakhis, Moscow 1986) 9 ♗xe4 dxe4 10 ♘c3 ♗g7 11 ♘ge2 0-0 12 ♕d2 f5 13 0-0-0 ♘c6 14 h5 a6, Yakovich-Zuhovitsky, Rostov 1988, and now Bangiev thinks that White is better after 15 h6.

7 ♘c3 c6

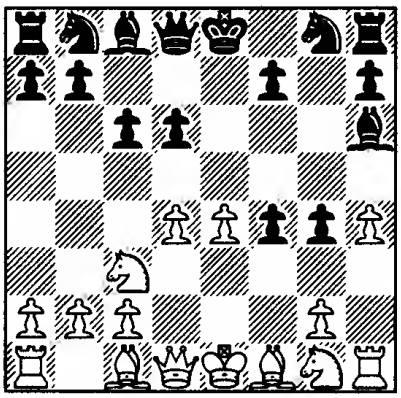
Here three other moves are possible:

a) 7...♘f6 aims to start an immediate attack on White's centre after 8 ♘ge2 d5!? Then the game Christoffel-

Morgado, Correspondence 1995, continued 9 e5?! ♘h5 10 g3 ♘c6 11 ♗g2 ♘e7 12 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 13 ♘xf4 ♘xf4 14 gxf4 c6 15 ♕e2 h5 and Black had a small advantage in view of his control of the important f5-square. Gallagher suggests that White's play can be improved with the more dynamic 9 ♗xf4!? ♗xf4 10 ♘xf4 dxe4 11 ♗c4!, looking for an attack down the weakened f-file. After 11...♘c6! (Black must attack d4, not just to win a pawn but also to exchange queens) 12 0-0 ♕xd4+ 13 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘fd5 ♘xd5 15 ♘xd5 ♘e6 16 ♘f6+ ♔e7 17 ♖ae1 Gallagher concludes that White has more than enough for his pawns. Indeed, he should regain them both over the next couple of moves whilst retaining a positional advantage.

b) 7...♘c6 is Black's second option. Now 8 ♗b5 a6 9 ♗xc6+ bxc6 10 ♕d3 ♕f6 11 ♗d2 ♘e7 12 0-0-0 was unclear in Bangiev-Pashaian, Correspondence 1987. The critical move is 8 ♘ge2, which leads to the sharp variation 8... f3 9 ♘f4 f2+! 10 ♔xf2 g3+ 11 ♔xg3 ♘f6. Black has sacrificed his f- and g-pawns to expose the white king in similar fashion to the 5...d6 variation of the Kieseritzky (see Chapter 2, Games 8-10). This position has been analysed extensively by Gallagher, whose main line runs 12 ♗e2 ♖g8+ 13 ♔f2 ♘g4+ 14 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 15 ♕d3 ♗g7 16 ♗e3 ♕d7 17 ♘cd5 0-0-0 18 b4 ♖de8 19 b5 ♘d8 20 c4 ♘e6, and now 21 c5 dxc5 22 dxc5 ♗xa1 23 ♖xa1 ♘xf4 24 ♗xf4 gives White compensation for the exchange.

c) 7...♗e6 was tried in Gallagher-Hübner, Biel 1991. Now instead of 8 ♕d3 a6! 9 ♗d2 ♘c6, which looked good for Black in the game, Gallagher suggests 8 ♘ge2, when 8...♕f6 9 g3 fxg3 10 ♘xg3 ♗xc1 11 ♖xc1 ♕f4 is not too different from the position reached in Games 1 and 2.



8 ♘ge2 ♕f6 9 g3 fxg3 10 ♘xg3 ♗xc1 11 ♖xc1 ♕h6?

After this White achieves easy development. The correct 11...♕f4, which prevents White's smooth build-up by attacking the knight on g3, is examined in the next game.

12 ♗d3! ♕e3+ 13 ♘ce2 ♘e7 14 ♕d2!

This game demonstrates that the King's Gambit often offers White good endgame chances, even when he is a pawn down.

14...♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 d5?

It is never a good idea to open the centre when you are underdeveloped. White now regains his pawn while maintaining his positional advantages. It was better to dig in with 15...♗e6, e.g. 16 c4 ♘a6 or 16...c5.

16 ♖ce1 ♗e6

If 16...dxe4 17 ♘xe4 the threat of 18 ♘d6+ is very disruptive.

17 ♘f4 0-0

Giving back the pawn, as 17...dxe4 18 ♖xe4 leads to disaster on the e-file.

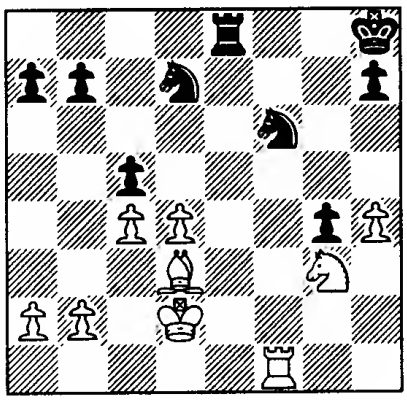
18 exd5 ♘xd5 19 ♘xe6 fxe6 20 ♖xe6

White regains his pawn with excellent chances. He has more space in the centre, a lead in development and the opportunity to attack the sickly black g-pawn, which, although passed, is well blockaded and difficult to support.

20...♘d7 21 ♘f5

It was even better to play 21 ♗f5 according to Short, when after 21...♘7f6 22 c4 ♘b6 23 ♔d3 White is in complete control.

21...♔h8 22 ♖f1 ♖ae8 23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 24 c4 ♘5f6 25 ♘g3 c5



A typical King's Gambit situation has arisen. The black kingside pawns are inert, while the white centre is mobile and strong. Therefore Akopian concedes a protected passed pawn, hoping to entice the knight from the excellent blockade square on g3 and so activate the g-pawn. The alternative was to wait passively while White increased his space advantage with b2-b4 etc.

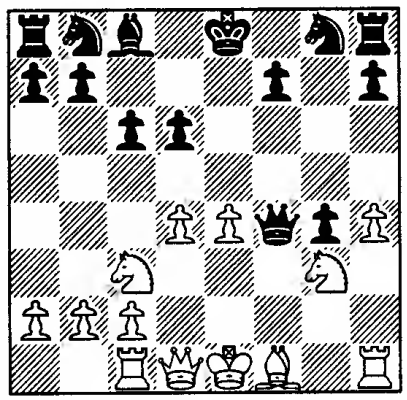
26 d5 ♔g7 27 ♘f5+ ♔h8 28 ♘d6 ♖f8 29 ♖e1 g3 30 ♗f5 ♘b6 31 b3 ♘e8 32 ♘xb7 ♘g7 33 ♗h3 ♖f4 34 ♘xc5 ♖xh4 35 ♗g2 ♖h2 36 ♖e2 ♘f5 37 ♗e4 ♘d6 38 ♗f3 ♖h6 39 ♘e6 ♖f6 40 ♗g2 ♘d7 41 c5 ♘f7 42 d6 ♘fe5 43 ♗d5 ♖f5 44 c6 ♘b6 45 ♗g2 ♖f2 46 ♖xf2 gxf2 47 ♔e2 1-0

Game 2

Fedorov-Pinter

Pula 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g1 ♗h6 7 ♘c3 c6 8 ♘ge2 ♕f6 9 g3 fxg3 10 ♘xg3 ♗xc1 11 ♖xc1 ♕f4!



An attempt to disrupt the build up of White's position. The attack on the knight means that White has no time for ♗d3 as played in the game above.

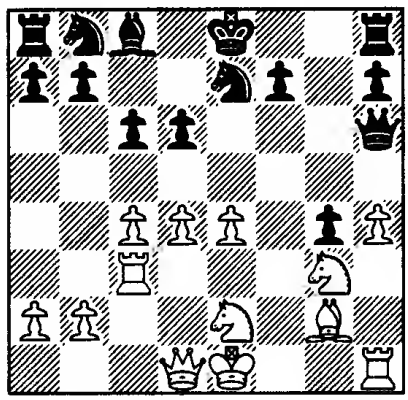
12 ♘ce2 ♕e3 13 c4?!

White finds an ingenious way to expel the queen. Nevertheless, the endgame with 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 seems a better approach.

13...♘e7 14 ♖c3 ♕h6 15 ♗g2

White could still have played for an endgame with 15 ♕d2. However, 15...♕xd2+ 16 ♔xd2 c5! 17 ♗g2 ♘bc6 looks better for Black. Why is this

endgame worse for White than in Short-Akopian above? The point is that White has played c2-c4 here, which means that Black's counterblow ...c6-c5! cannot be met with c2-c3, maintaining control of the central dark squares. The white centre is thus split after the inevitable d4xc5 and the e5-square becomes a strong outpost for a black knight. White is correct to seek a middlegame attack in the game.



15...0-0

Here 15...c5 is the natural positional move, undermining White's centre. But the crucial question is: can White overwhelm his opponent before he can develop his pieces? It seems that the answer is yes after 16 ♖d3! ♘bc6 17 dxc5 dxc5 18 ♖d6. For example, 18...♗e6 (18...♕e3 19 ♘f1! wins the queen, while 18...♕g7 19 ♘h5 ♕xb2 20 ♘f6+ ♔f8 21 0-0 gives White a big attack) 19 ♘f5! ♕f6 20 ♖xe6! fxe6 21 ♘d6+ ♔d7 22 e5! ♕g6 23 ♘f4 ♕g8 24 ♘xb7+ ♔c8 25 ♘xc5 ♕d8 26 ♕d6 with a very strong attack.

16 0-0 ♘g6?

Here 16...c5! was the most challenging move. As far as I can see Black then has good chances, e.g. 17 dxc5 dxc5 18 ♖d3 ♘bc6 19 ♖d6 ♕xh4!? Of course, the position remains very complicated and there could be a knockout blow concealed among the thickets of variations.

17 ♖f6

Now, in view of the threat h4-h5, White wins the important d6-pawn, after which he can *always* claim positional compensation for the pawn deficit.

17...♕xh4 18 ♖xd6 c5

Too late!

19 ♘f5 ♕g5 20 ♖d5

After 20 ♖g3!?, 20...h5 looks okay for Black, but not 20...♘c6 21 ♖xg4! nor 20...♗xf5? 21 exf5 ♕xf5 22 ♗xb7 ♘d7 23 ♖d5! ♕e6 24 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 25 ♘f4!! ♘xf4? 26 ♕xg4+ and White will be the exchange up in the endgame.

20...cxd4 21 ♖g3 ♕f6 22 ♖xg4 ♗g5 23 ♘f4 ♗xd5 24 ♘xd5 ♕e5 25 ♖g5 ♔h8 26 ♖h5 ♘d7

There was a draw by repetition after 26...♖e8 27 ♘fe7 ♕g7 28 ♘f5 ♕e5.

27 ♕f3

A last winning try. White could have forced a draw with 27 ♖xh7+ ♔xh7 28 ♕h5+ ♔g8 29 ♘h6+ ♔h7 30 ♘f5+ ♔g8 31 ♘h6+.

27...♖fe8 28 ♘h6 ♕g7 29 ♘xf7+ ♔g8 30 ♘h6+ ♔h8 31 ♘f7+ ½-½

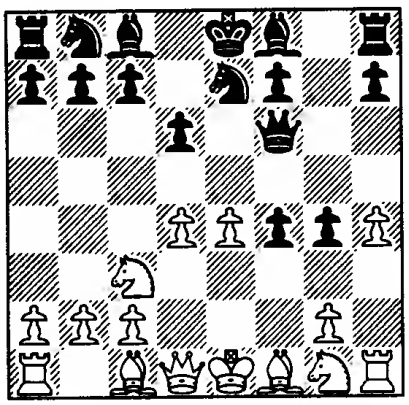
White has to force the draw in view of the material situation.

Game 3
Gallagher-G.Flear
Lenk 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g1 ♕f6 7 ♘c3 ♘e7

After 7...c6 8 ♘ge2 ♗h6 play will

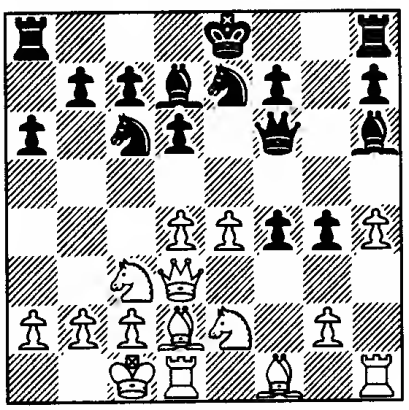
transpose to the two games above. Gallagher points out that the attempt to refute 7...c6 with 8 e5 falters after 8...dxe5 9 ♘e4 ♕e7 10 dxe5 ♕xe5 11 ♕e2 ♗e7 12 ♗d2 ♘f6! Meanwhile, Bangiev recommends 7...c6 8 ♘ge2 ♘h6, but this is either a brainstorm or a misprint.



8 ♘ge2 ♗h6 9 ♕d2!?

Note this idea only works after ...♘e7. If you put the knight back on g8 and play...c7-c6 instead, then 9 ♕d2?? loses a piece after 9...f3.

Gallagher actually prefers 9 ♕d3 here. Play could go 9...a6 (to play ...♘bc6 without allowing ♘b5) 10 ♗d2 ♘bc6 11 0-0-0 ♗d7 when a critical position is reached:



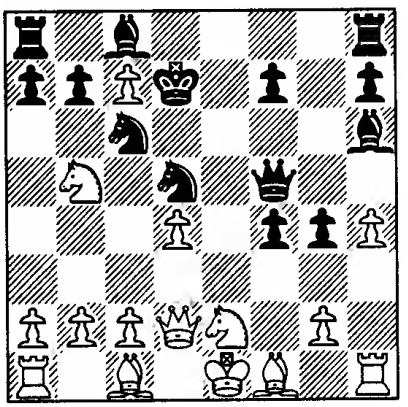
This idea received a practical test in the game Russell-Beaton, Scotland 1994 (through a different move order beginning 8 ♕d3!?). Unfortunately, White blundered immediately with 12 ♘d5?, when he had nothing for his pawn after 12...♘xd5 13 exd5 ♘e7 14 ♘c3 0-0-0 etc. The key variation is the calm 12 ♔b1 0-0-0 13 ♗c1, when John Shaw gives 13...f3 as unclear, while 13...♖he8 14 g3 f3 15 ♘f4 is Bangiev's choice. But doesn't Black have an excellent position after, say, 15...♕h8 and 16...f5 here?

9...♘bc6 10 ♘b5!

The only way to exploit the queen's absence from d8 is to attack c7. After 10 g3 ♗g7! 11 d5 fxg3! 12 ♘xg3 (White cannot allow 12...♕f2+ and 13...g2) 12...♘d4 13 ♗g2 ♘f3+ 14 ♗xf3 ♕xf3 15 ♘ce2 ♗e5 Black was winning in Bangiev-Figer, Correspondence 1987.

10...♔d8 11 d5

This looks horribly anti-positional, as it gives up the e5-square to the black knight. Bangiev recommends 11 e5!, which leads to a highly contentious position after 11...♕f5 12 exd6 ♘d5 13 dxc7+ ♔d7.



The Russian Master claims that White is better in the complications. However, according to Gallagher 'Bangiev didn't suggest a way to beat off the black attack. I can't see anything resembling a White advantage.' Who is right? In a book published after Gallagher's comments, Bangiev comes up with the goods: 14 ♘g3!? Somewhat surprisingly, this seems good for White! For example:

a) 14...♕e6+ 15 ♗e2 ♖e8 (15...♘e3 16 d5! ♕xd5 17 ♕xd5+ ♘xd5 18 ♗xg4+) 16 0-0 fxg3 17 ♕xh6 ♕xh6 18 ♗xg4+ ♕e6 19 ♖xf7+ ♖e7 20 ♗xe6+ ♔xe6 21 ♖xe7+ ♘dxe7 22 ♗g5 ♔d7 23 ♖e1 when White has three pawns for the piece and a dangerous initiative since the black queenside is buried.

b) 14...♖e8+ 15 ♔d1 ♕e6 (15...♘e3+ 16 ♕xe3!) 16 ♗d3 ♘e3+ 17 ♕xe3! fxe3 18 ♗f5 e2+ 19 ♔e1 ♗xc1 20 ♖xc1 a6 21 ♗xe6+ fxe6 22 ♘c3 ♘xd4 23 ♘cxe2 ♘xe2 24 ♔xe2 ♔xc7. Here the weak black pawns on e6 and g4 give White a positional advantage (analysis by Bangiev).

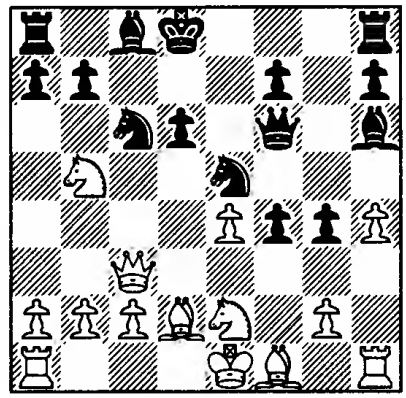
Judging from this, 11 e5 seems to be a much better try than 11 d5.

11...♘e5 12 ♘xf4

In a later game Gallagher improved with 12 ♕c3 c6 (forced) 13 dxc6 ♘7xc6 14 ♗d2.

see following diagram

Black now tried 14...f3 and was soon overwhelmed: 15 0-0-0! fxe2 16 ♗xe2 ♔e7 (if 16...a6 17 ♖hf1 ♕e6 18 ♘xd6 and White has an enduring attack for his piece; maybe 16...♗d7 is best) 17 ♖hf1 ♕g6 18 h5! ♕xh5 (if 18...♕e6 19 ♘c7 ♕xa2 20 ♗xh6 and Black's king faces an attack from all White's pieces) 19 ♖h1 ♗xd2+ 20 ♕xd2 ♕g6 21 ♖h6! ♖d8 22 ♖xg6 hxg6 23 ♘c7 ♗e6 24 ♘xa8 ♖xa8 25 ♕xd6+ ♔e8 26 ♗b5 ♖c8 27 ♕xe5 1-0 Gallagher-Fontaine, Bern Open 1994.



This seems very convincing, but 14...a6!? would have been a much tougher defence. Then Black would win after 15 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 16 0-0-0 ♗d7 17 ♗xf4 ♗xf4+ 18 ♘xf4 ♕b4 etc., so White has to try 15 ♘bd4. With the knight chased from b5, 15...f3! is now safe, e.g. 16 ♗xh6 (after 16 0-0-0 fxe2 17 ♗xe2 ♗d7 White has little to show for his piece) 16...f2+ 17 ♔d1 ♕xh6 and Black is much better.

12...a6 13 ♘d4 g3!

White has regained his pawn but is in serious trouble due to the pin on f4. Flear's excellent move prevents White from supporting the pinned knight with g2-g3.

14 ♘de2 ♖g8 15 ♕d4 ♗g4 16 ♗e3 ♗xe2 17 ♘xe2 ♘f3+! 18 gxf3 ♕xf3 19 ♗xh6 ♕xh1 20 ♗g5 g2 21 ♔f2 ♖xg5

Instead of giving back the exchange, the computer program Fritz prefers to win another one with 21...h6. Now a

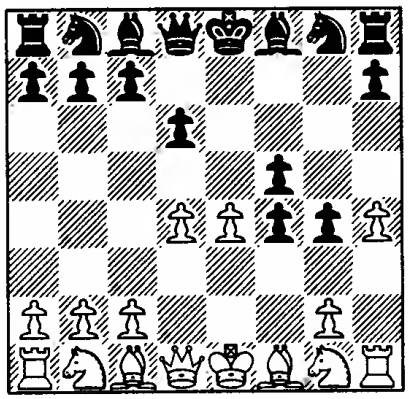
bishop retreat from g5 allows 22...g1♕ with a winning attack, so 22 ♗xg2 (22 ♗f6 ♕h2! 23 ♔e3 ♖g3+ 24 ♔d2 g1♕ wins) 22...♕xa1 23 ♗f6 ♕xa2 24 e5 ♕a5 and the white attack will fail, with huge losses.

22 hxg5 gxf1♕+ 23 ♖xf1 ♕h4+ 24 ♘g3 ♔d7 25 ♕f6 ♖g8 26 ♖h1 ♕xg5 27 ♕xg5 ♖xg5 28 ♖xh7 ♔e8 ½-½

White seems to be a little better here after 29 ♘h5.

Game 4
Hector-Leko
Copenhagen 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g1 f5



An imaginative idea. White hasn't yet got any pieces in play, so Black feels that he has time to strike at his opponent's centre and dispose of the strong e-pawn. It looks risky to remove the remaining pawn cover from Black's king, but hasn't White done the same thing with 2 f4? Furthermore, White's play is hardly above criticism. In the first six moves he has developed and then undeveloped his knight, and moved his rook's pawn two squares. This hardly accords with the precepts of classical chess, which require rapid and harmonious development of the pieces.

7 ♘c3

Here 7 ♗xf4 fxe4 8 ♘c3 ♘f6 transposes to the main game.

An important tactical point is the fact that 7 exf5? fails to 7...♕e7+. For example, 8 ♗e2 ♗xf5 9 ♘c3 (if 9 ♗xf4 ♕e4!) 9...♗h6 10 ♘d5 ♕e4 11 ♘xc7+ ♔d7 and Black wins (Raetsky). Or if 8 ♕e2 ♗xf5 9 ♗xf4 ♗xc2! and White has hardly any compensation for the pawn. It is a pity that 8 ♘e2 doesn't seem to work after 8...f3, e.g. 9 ♗g5 fxe2 10 ♗xe2 ♘f6 11 0-0 ♗g7 12 ♗b5+ ♔d8! or 9 gxf3 gxf3 10 ♖h3 fxe2 11 ♗xe2 ♗h6!? In neither case does White have enough play for a piece.

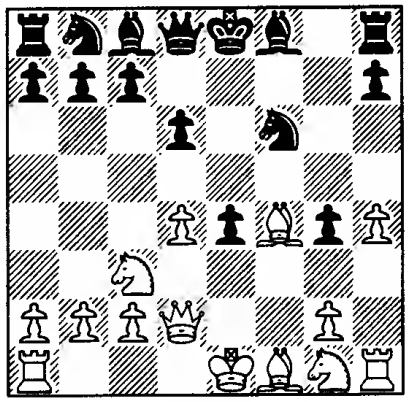
7...♘f6 8 ♗xf4

The critical move. In Shevchenko-Raetsky, Russia 1992, White played the careless 8 ♕e2? and after 8...♗h6 9 exf5+ ♔f7! Black suddenly had an overwhelming lead in development. White was swept away in impressive style: 10 ♕f2 ♖e8+ 11 ♔d1 g3 12 ♕f3 ♗xf5 13 ♗c4+ ♔g7 14 ♘ge2 ♗g4 15 ♕xb7 d5! 16 ♗d3 (if 16 ♕xa8 dxc4 17 ♕xa7 ♘c6 followed by 18...♘xd4 crashes through) 16...♘e4! (completing the strategy began with 6...f5; Black has absolute control of e4) 17 ♕xa8 (if 17 ♗xe4 dxe4 18 ♕xa8 ♕xd4+ 19 ♗d2 f3! - Raetsky) 17...♘f2+ 18 ♔e1 ♘xh1 19 ♕xd5 ♕xh4 20 ♗c4 ♔h8 21 ♕f7 ♗h5 22 ♕xc7 ♘f2 23 ♔f1 ♕h1+ 24 ♘g1 ♘g4 0-1, as 25 ♘ce2 ♘h2+ 26 ♔e1 ♕xg1+ is more than flesh can stand. White played the whole game without his queen's rook or bishop.

8...fxe4 9 ♕d2

White has also tried 9 ♕e2 d5 10 ♗e5, when Bangiev recommends 10...c6! 11 ♘d1 ♘bd7 12 ♘e3 ♘xe5 13 dxe5 ♘d7 14 ♕xg4 ♕a5+ 15 c3 ♘xe5 16 ♕h5+ ♘f7 as clearly good for Black.

At the time of writing, theory has yet to decide on the strongest response to 7...f5. Nevertheless, I would suggest that 9 d5 ought to be considered. I like the idea of preventing Black consolidating his centre with 9...d5. In his annotations to the Hector game, Leko gives 9 d5 a question mark, claiming that Black is a little better after 9...♗g7 10 h5 0-0 11 h6 ♗h8 12 ♕d2 ♕e8. However, instead of pushing the h-pawn White can mobilise his pieces, e.g. 9...♗g7 10 ♕d2 0-0 11 ♘ge2, planning moves like 0-0-0, ♘d4 and ♗c4.



9...d5 10 ♗e5?!

White's position begins to fall apart after this. According to Leko, White should have played 10 ♘b5 ♘a6 11 ♘c3 c6 12 ♗xa6 bxa6 13 ♘ge2 with unclear play. However, since Black can force a draw by repetition with 11...♘b8, this recommendation is hardly inspiring. White doesn't play the King's Gambit to agree a draw after 11 or 12 moves!

10...c6 11 ♘ge2 ♗e6 12 ♘f4

If 12 ♕g5 ♘bd7 13 ♘f4 ♕e7! 14 ♘h5 ♘xh5! 15 ♗xh8 ♘g3 16 ♖g1 ♕xg5 17 hxg5 ♗e7 gives Black excellent play for the exchange – Leko.

12...♗f7 13 ♘d1 ♘bd7 14 ♘e3 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♕c7!

This simple move refutes White's attack by pinning the e-pawn and preparing ...0-0-0. Since the e-pawn is fatally weak, White will soon be two pawns down without any real compensation.

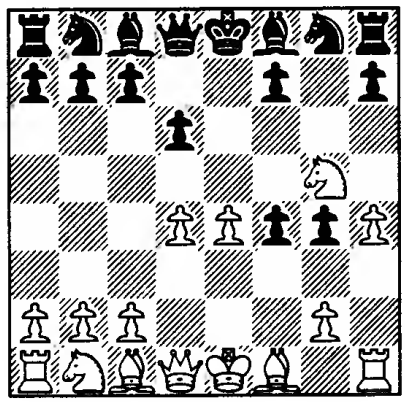
16 ♕c3 0-0-0 17 0-0-0 ♘h5 18 ♘e2 ♗h6 19 ♔b1 ♗xe3 20 ♕xe3 ♔b8 21 ♕g5 ♖hg8 22 ♕f5 ♗g6 23 ♕g5 ♖de8 24 ♕xg4 ♕xe5 25 ♕g5 ♕xg5 26 hxg5 ♖e5 27 g4 ♘g7 28 ♘f4 ♘e6 0-1

Game 5

Morozevich-Kasparov

Paris (rapidplay) 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g5



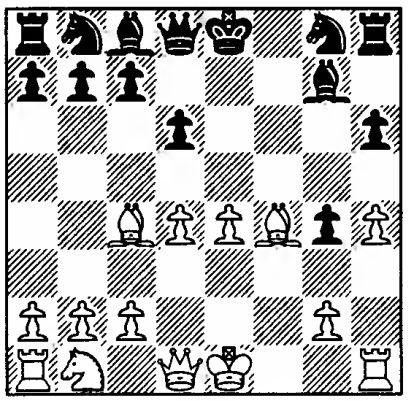
White plays in enterprising style,

hoping to bamboozle the World Champion with a rarely seen sacrificial line. Since this was a rapidplay game, such an approach makes some sense.

6...h6

An interesting moment. According to Fischer it is better to play 6...f6!, when 7 ♘h3 gxh3 8 ♕h5+ ♔d7 9 ♗xf4 ♕e8! 10 ♕f3 ♔d8 leaves White with little for the piece. Another possibility given by *ECO* is 7 ♗xf4 fxg5 8 ♗xg5 ♗e7 9 ♕d2 ♗e6! 10 ♘c3 ♘d7 and again Black should be able to defend successfully. This opinion is supported by Gallagher. Why did Kasparov avoid 6...f6 then? Perhaps he was afraid of an improvement or perhaps he had simply forgotten the theoretical refutation.

7 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 8 ♗xf4 ♗g7 9 ♗c4+ ♔e8



White now has a favourable version of the Allgaier Gambit, since normally after 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘g5 h6 6 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 7 ♗c4+ Black responds 7...d5! (or if 7 d4, then 7...f3! 8 ♗c4+ d5). The point is that Black usually gives up the d-pawn to speed up his development. In the game Black has already played ...d7-d6, so he would be a tempo down if he were to revert to ...d6-d5 after ♗c4+.

It is also worth comparing the sacrifice here with the line 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 d6 6 ♘xf7?, as played in Schlechter-Maroczy, Vienna 1903. (This is real coffee-house chess. I have a book on Schlechter that is full of fine positional games. Yet in those days nobody was immune from the outlandish sacrifices which seem ridiculous to modern eyes.) After 6...♔xf7 7 ♗c4+ ♔e8 Black was clearly better. In the Kasparov game we have reached a similar position with the moves d2-d4 and ...h7-h6 thrown in. This should help White. Or does it? The move ...h7-h6 prevents ♗g5 in some lines and, as we shall see, h7 proves a good square for the black rook...

10 0-0??

Very stereotyped. The white king will prove to be a target on the kingside. It was better to play 10 ♘c3, intending 11 ♕d2, 12 0-0-0 etc. (if ...♘c6 then ♗e3) with an enduring initiative which would have offered fair chances in a rapid game. If this plan fails then the whole variation is simply bad for White.

10...♘c6 11 ♗e3

White might as well play 11 c3, as the coming incursion on the f-file leads nowhere.

11...♕xh4!

A good defensive move, vacating d8 for the king, and a strong attacking move, threatening 12...g3.

12 ♖f7 ♖h7!

Another dual-purpose move. Black

defends the bishop and threatens 13...♗xd4! 14 ♖xh7? ♗xe3+ and mate on f2.

13 e5 ♘a5

This beats off the attack with frightful losses. It is no wonder that the attack fails: not only has White sacrificed a piece, but the queenside rook and knight may as well be any place but on the board.

14 ♗d3 ♔xf7 15 ♕f1+ ♔e7 16 ♗xh7 ♗e6 17 ♘d2 ♖f8 18 exd6+ cxd6 19 ♕e2 ♔d8 20 c3 ♘e7 21 ♖e1 ♗c4!

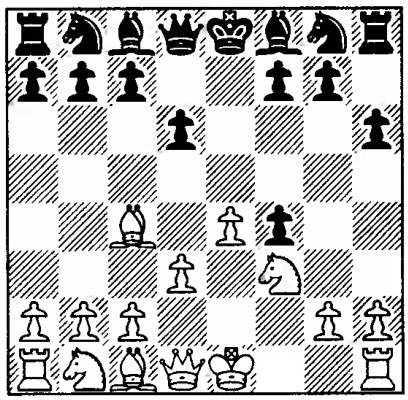
Of course capturing twice on c4 now leaves e1 en prise. The game move allows a mercifully quick finish.

22 ♗f2 ♖xf2 23 ♕xf2 g3 0-1

Mate on h2 or loss of the queen follows.

Game 6
Gallagher-Kuzmin
Biel 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 ♗c4 h6 5 d3



This is Gallagher's pet idea. White strengthens his centre and keeps d4 free for his king's knight (this may sound bizarre but all is soon revealed!). After the alternative 5 d4, play could transpose to a Hanstein with 5...g5 etc. (see Chapter 3, Game 20). Since the Hanstein looks suspect for White, this is another reason to consider 5 d3. However, the analysis below also gives 5 d3 a thumbs down, so the conclusion seems to be that 4 ♗c4 is inaccurate: 4 d4 is the only decent try.

5...g5 6 g3 g4

Four other moves are possible:

a) 6...fxg3 7 hxg3 ♗g7 looks dangerous for Black after the sacrifice 8 ♘xg5 hxg5 9 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 10 ♕h5 ♕f6 11 ♘c3. However, White has still has to prove the win after, say, 11...♔f8!? 12 ♘d5 ♕e5!? or 12 ♗xg5 ♕g6!

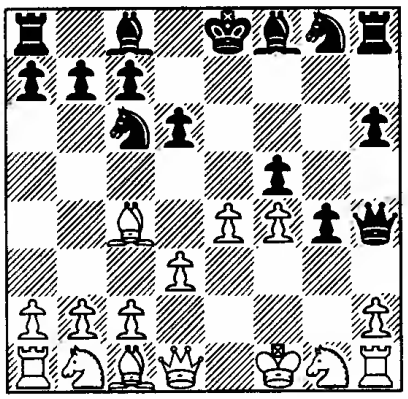
b) 6...♗h3 was played in Gallagher-Lane, Hastings 1990, when 7 ♘d4?! d5! 8 exd5 ♗g7 led to obscure play. Gallagher suggests that 7 ♕d2 was better, preventing ...♗g2 and intending to capture on f4 (the immediate 7 gxf4 is less good, as 7...g4 8 ♘d4 ♕h4+ looks annoying; whereas after 7 ♕d2 Black's check on h4 can be answered by ♕f2).

c) 6...♘c6 7 gxf4 g4 (if 7...♗g4 Gallagher suggests 8 c3, hoping for 8...gxf4 9 ♗xf4 ♘e5? 10 ♗xe5 and 11 ♗xf7+ winning) 8 ♘g1 ♕h4+ 9 ♔f1 f5! (much more dynamic than 9...♘f6 10 ♔g2 ♘h5 11 ♘c3 g3 12 ♕e1 ♖g8 13 h3 with advantage to White, as given by Gallagher; note that 12...♘xf4+ 13 ♗xf4 ♕xf4 14 ♘d5 is bad for Black, as is 13...♘xf4+ for the same reason)

see following diagram

10 ♘c3 ♘f6 11 ♔g2 fxe4 12 dxe4 ♗d7 13 h3? (following the plan out-

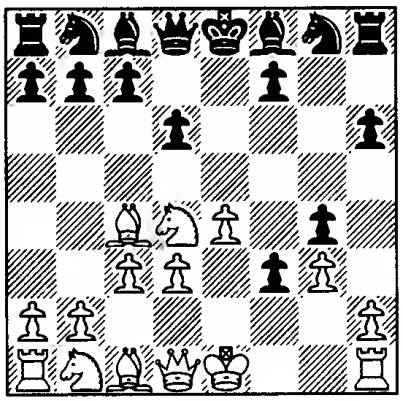
lined in the last bracket, but here it is inappropriate; 13 ♗e3, intending 14 ♕e1, looks better, when White may have the advantage) 13...♘h5! 14 hxg4 ♕g3+ 15 ♔f1 ♘xf4 16 ♕f3 (the queen exchange saves White from immediate collapse, but he has two weak pawns on e4 and g4 and a hole on e5, whereas Black only has one weakness on h6; nevertheless, he uses his slight lead in development to avoid the worst) 16...♕xf3+ 17 ♘xf3 ♘g6 18 g5 (liquidating one of his weak pawns) 18...♗g4 19 ♗e2 0-0-0!? (on this move or the last Black could have played ...h6xg5, but Beliavsky chooses a dynamic pawn sacrifice) 20 gxh6 ♗e7 with unclear play which eventually led to a draw in Belotti-Beliavsky, Reggio Emilia 1995/96.



d) 6...♗g7 7 c3? ♘c6! (ruling out 8 ♘d4) 8 ♘a3 ♗e6 9 ♕b3 ♕d7 10 gxf4 ♗xc4 11 ♕xc4 (if 11 ♘xc4 d5!) 0-0-0 12 ♗d2 (McDonald-Morris, Douai 1992) and now Black should have played 12...♕h3! 13 ♖f1 d5! with a big advantage as 14 exd5? ♖e8+ 15 ♔f2 g4 wins for Black. Critical was 7 gxf4! g4 8 ♘g1 ♕h4+ 9 ♔f1 and we have option c) above but with the black bishop on g7 rather than the knight on c6. Perhaps Black should try 9...f5, as 9...♘f6 10 ♔g2 ♘h5 11 ♘c3 g3 12 ♕e1 ♖g8 13 h3 is good for White (if 13...♘xf4+ 14 ♗xf4 ♕xf4 15 ♘d5 etc.).

7 ♘d4 f3 8 c3

Gallagher suggests the alternative plan of 8 ♗e3, ♘c3, ♕d2 and 0-0-0 in his book.



8...♘c6!

This is Kuzmin's improvement. Rather than prevent the white knight going to d4 with 6...♗g7 or 6...♘c6, Black attacks it when it reaches this square. Black has tried two other moves:

a) 8...♗g7?! (actually the move order was 7...♗g7 8 c3 f3) 9 ♕b3 ♕d7 (forced because if 9...♕e7 10 ♘f5! ♗xf5 11 ♕xb7 wins) 10 ♗f4 ♘c6 (too late) 11 ♘f5 ♗e5 12 ♘d2 and White had good play for the pawn in Gallagher-G.Flear, Paris 1990.

b) 8...♘d7!? is an improvement on Flear's 8...♗g7, played by ... his wife! The knight heads for e5, which is a more efficient way of defending f7 from attack by ♕b3 than 9...♕d7 in the previous variation. The game

McDonald-C.Flear, Hastings 1995, continued 9 ♘a3 ♘e5 10 ♗f4 ♘xc4 11 ♘xc4 ♘e7! (and now the other knight heads for e5!) 12 ♕a4+ ♗d7 13 ♕b3 ♘g6 14 ♗e3 ♘e5 15 0-0-0 ♖b8? (too passive; 15...♗g7 is fine for Black) 16 ♘xe5 dxe5 17 ♘f5! (now White has good chances) 17...♗xf5?? 18 ♕b5+! (a deadly zwischenzug) 18...♕d7 19 ♕xe5+ ♗e6 20 ♕xh8 h5 21 ♗c5 and Black resigned. Despite the unfortunate outcome, Black's opening idea seems good.

9 ♘a3?!

Here 9 ♘xc6 bxc6 would be positional capitulation, so White should try 9 ♕a4, when Kuzmin analyses 9...♗d7 10 ♕b3 ♘e5 11 ♕xb7 ♘xc4 12 dxc4 ♗g7 as slightly better for Black.

9...♘xd4 10 cxd4 ♗g7

White's centre is dislocated and will inevitably crumble. Therefore, Gallagher goes for a do or die attack.

11 ♕b3 ♕e7 12 ♗f4 c6

Not 12...♗xd4? 13 ♗xf7+ ♕xf7 14 ♕a4+ ♗d7 15 ♕xd4 etc.

13 ♕b4

Playing for traps as 13 d5 ♘f6 14 dxc6 bxc6 is bad.

13...a5!

Kuzmin avoids the draw with 13...d5? 14 ♗d6 ♕g5 (14...♕e6?! is risky: 15 ♗xd5 cxd5 16 ♘b5 etc.) 15 ♗f4 ♕e7 etc.

14 ♕b6

If 14 ♕xd6 ♕xd6 15 ♗xd6 b5 16 ♗b3 a4 17 ♗c2 ♗xd4 and wins (Kuzmin).

14...d5 15 ♗xd5

The only chance, as 15 ♗b3 ♖a6 16 ♕c7 ♕xc7 17 ♗xc7 ♗xd4 is hopeless.

15...♖a6!

The last difficult move. On the other hand, 15...cxd5? 16 ♘b5 would have given White a dangerous attack.

16 ♕b3 cxd5 17 ♘b5 ♕b4+

The exchange of queens kills off White's initiative.

18 ♕xb4 axb4 19 ♘c7+ ♔d8 20 ♘xa6 bxa6

The dust has cleared and Black has a decisive material advantage.

21 e5 ♘e7 22 ♖c1 ♗e6 23 h3 gxh3 24 ♔f2 ♔d7 25 ♔xf3 ♘c6 26 g4 ♘xd4+ 27 ♔e3 ♘c6 28 d4 f6 29 exf6 ♗xf6 30 ♖xh3 ♗xg4 31 ♖xh6 ♗xd4+ 32 ♔d3 ♖xh6 33 ♗xh6 ♗xb2 34 ♖f1 ♗e6 35 ♗d2 a5 36 ♖h1 ♗f5+ 37 ♔e3 ♔d6 38 ♖h6+ ♔c5 0-1

Game 7

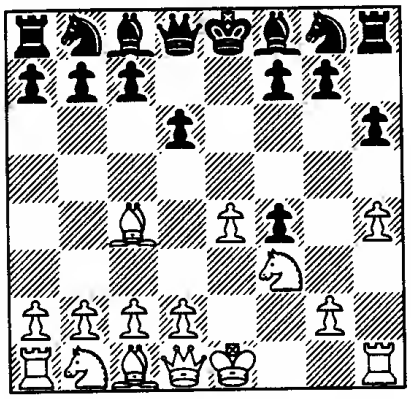
C.Chandler-Howard

Correspondence 1977

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6 4 ♗c4 h6

An interesting alternative idea here is 4...♗e7!?, as played in McDonald-Skembris, Cannes 1993. After 5 0-0 ♘f6 6 d3 d5 7 exd5 ♘xd5 8 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 9 ♗xf4 0-0 White had a minuscule advantage. In effect, Black has played a Cunningham Defence but avoided the normal problem after 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♗c4 ♘f6 of 5 e5!, chasing his knight from the centre. The drawback is that he is a tempo down on the line 5 d3 d5 6 exd5 ♘xd5 7 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 8 ♗xf4. However, 5 d3 is hardly an ultra-sharp move, so it seems that Black can afford this liberty.

5 h4



Attacking the ghost of the pawn on g5.

5...♘f6

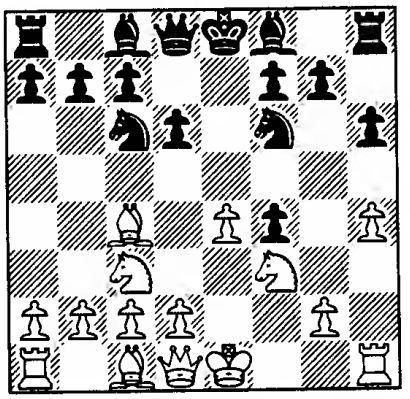
Instead Black could go hunting for more pawns with 5...♗e7 6 ♘c3 (a more solid approach is 6 d4 ♗g4 7 ♗xf4 ♗xh4+ 8 g3) 6...♗g4 7 d4 ♗xh4+ 8 ♔f1 g5. However, according to an article in *Chess Monthly*, January 1976, 9 ♕d3 then gives White sufficient play, e.g. 9...♗xf3 (more or less forced, as 9...♗g3 10 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 11 ♕xg3 fxg3 12 ♗xg5 is best avoided) 10 ♕xf3. White has chances in view of his lead in development, his two bishops and the awkward position of the bishop on h4.

6 ♘c3 ♗g4

Another sharp possibility is 6...♗e7 7 d3 ♘h5 8 ♘e5 dxe5 9 ♕xh5 0-0 10 g3!?, planning to answer 10...fxg3 with 11 ♗xh6. However, the best move is probably 6...♘c6!, as played in McDonald-G.Flear, Hastings 1992/93.

see following diagram

After 7 d4 ♘h5 Black was ready to complete his development with ...♗e7, ...♗g4 and ...0-0, so White should do something fast.



The sacrifice 8 ♘e5 doesn't look particularly brilliant after 8...dxe5 9 ♕xh5 g6 and 10...♘xd4. I also didn't like the look of 8 ♘e2 ♕f6 or 8 ♘d5 ♘g3 9 ♖g1 g5 etc. Therefore, I tried the unusual looking move 8 d5!? ♘e7 9 ♘d4 ♘g3 10 ♖h2, when I was happily contemplating 11 ♗xf4 next move, or if 10...♘g6 then 11 h5 ♘e5 12 ♗b5+ followed by ♗xf4. However, Flear found a brilliant move which shows up all the weaknesses created by 8 d5: 10...g5!! 11 hxg5 ♘g6. Black has returned the extra pawn to keep hold of f4. 10...g5 has also cleared the diagonal a1-h8 for the dark-squared bishop, which White has weakened with d4-d5. The e5-square is now firmly in Black's hands and is a central outpost for a black knight or bishop. The game continued 12 ♗b5+ ♗d7 13 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 14 gxh6 ♗xh6 15 ♘f3 and now the simple 15...0-0-0, planning 16...♖de8 etc., attacking e4, is good for Black. The white king is a long way from the safety of the queenside. In the game Black tried the premature 15...f5, when 16 exf5 ♕xf5 17 ♕d3! was unclear.

7 d4 ♘h5 8 ♘e5!

Breaking the pin in some style. Of course 8...♗xd1 9 ♗xf7+ ♔e7 10 ♘d5 is mate.

8...dxe5 9 ♕xg4 ♘f6

The critical move is 9...♘g3 10 ♗xf4 ♘xh1 11 ♗xe5 (11 dxe5!? seems better - in the game the pawns look pretty on d4 and e4, but the e5-pawn becomes a battering ram and the d-file is opened; in fact it is difficult to see a good answer to the plan of e5-e6 in conjunction with ♖d1) 11...♕d7 12 ♕f3 ♘c6 13 0-0-0 and Black eventually won in Chandler-Haldane, Correspondence 1977.

10 ♕f5 ♘c6

If 10...♕xd4 11 ♕c8+ (11 ♘d5 ♔d8) 11...♔e7 12 ♘d5+! ♘xd5 13 ♗xd5 and Black seems lost in view of the attack on b7. For example, 13...c6 (13...♔f6 14 ♕xc7 ♗e7 15 ♕xb7) 14 ♕xb7+ ♘d7 15 ♕xa8 cxd5 16 ♕xd5 etc.

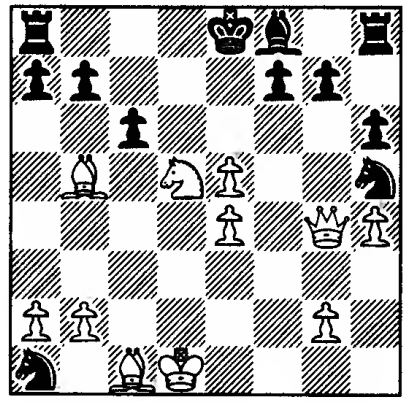
11 dxe5 ♘d4 12 ♕xf4 ♘xc2+ 13 ♔e2 ♕d4

If 13...♘xa1 14 exf6 ♕xf6 15 ♘d5! will win material - Chandler.

14 ♗b5+ c6 15 ♖d1 ♘h5 16 ♕g4

With his knights scattered and his kingside undeveloped, Black is lost.

16...♕xd1+ 17 ♔xd1 ♘xa1 18 ♘d5!



This elegant winning move is better than 18 ♕xh5 0-0-0+. The knight on h5 won't run away, so White prevents the black king from escaping to the queenside.

18...♖d8 19 ♕xh5 ♗c5

After 19...g6, 20 ♕f3 cxb5 21 b3, intending 22 ♗b2 winning the knight, is simplest.

20 ♕g4 ♔f8 21 ♕f5 ♗e7 22 e6 1-0

Summary
Although it is difficult to agree with Fischer that 3...d6 refutes the King's Gambit, it is certainly one of the best defences. At the time of writing, White can only hope for an 'unclear' verdict after best play in the main line, with 6...f5!? (Game 4) looking particularly challenging. The divergences from the main line with 4 ♗c4 (Games 6 and 7) don't seem very promising for White either.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d6

4 d4

4 ♗c4 h6 *(D)*

5 d3 – *Game 6*

5 h4 – *Game 7*

4...g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g1 *(D)*

6 ♘g5 – *Game 5*

6...♗h6

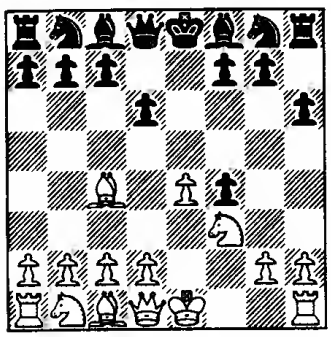
6...♕f6 – *Game 3*

6...f5 – *Game 4*

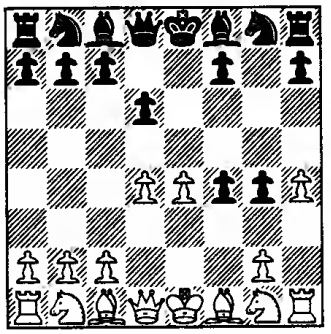
8 ♘ge2 ♕f6 9 g3 fxg3 10 ♘xg3 ♗xc1 11 ♖xc1 *(D)* **♕f4**

11...♕h6 – *Game 1*

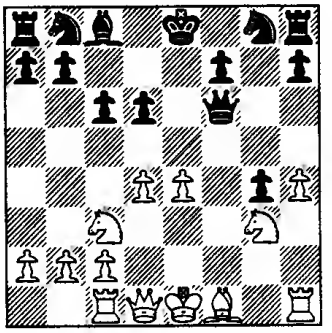
12 ♘ce2 – *Game 2*



4...h6

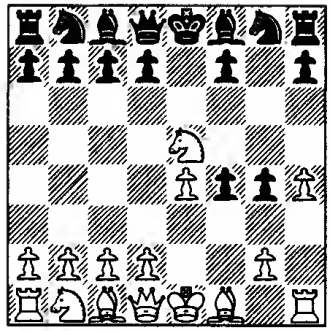


6 ♘g1



11 ♖xc1

CHAPTER TWO



Kieseritzky Gambit (3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5)

After

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5

the continuation

4 h4! g4 5 ♘e5

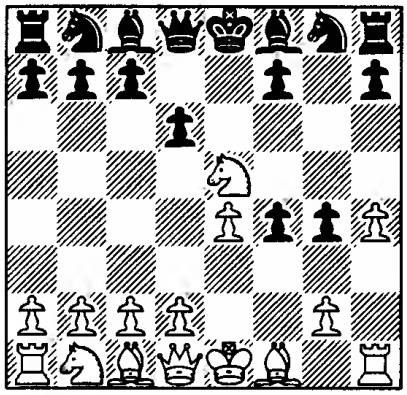
the Kieseritzky Gambit, is White's strongest continuation, and is the subject of the present chapter. It is important for White to undermine the pawn on g5 before it can be reinforced with ...h7-h6 and ...♗g7. If Black were given time – even a single move – to support his g5-pawn then he would have a solid, well entrenched chain of pawns on the kingside. He could then ignore any later h2-h4 thrust since g5 would be securely defended. In contrast, after the immediate 4 h4! Black has no time to set up a wall of pawns, as 4...h6 loses to 5 hxg5. Therefore, he has to advance his g-pawn again, which destroys any hopes of a compact pawn formation; his kingside is permanently wrecked. On the other hand, things are also not so simple for White. The move h2-h4 loosens the white kingside and the advance 4...g4 is awkward to meet since the knight on f3 is attacked and must move to safety. This disruption in White's position should give Black enough active play to compensate for his positional weaknesses.

Black has several replies to 5 ♘e5, the most popular of which at present are 5...d6 (Games 8-11) and 5...♘f6 (Games 12-17). The first of these returns the gambit pawn immediately in an attempt to seize the initiative, while the second forces the exchange of the black f-pawn for the white e-pawn, unless White adopts the aggressive 6 ♗c4 (see Games 12-14). Other Black options at move five are considered in the notes to Game 8.

Game 8
Short-Shirov
Madrid 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4! g4 5 ♘e5 d6

With this move Black sacrifices the g4-pawn in order to achieve a smooth and active development of his pieces.



The main alternative, 5...♘f6, is examined in Games 12-17.

Other possibilities for Black are:

a) 5...♗g7. The most important of the less popular moves. Indeed, Zak and Korchnoi go as far as giving it an exclamation mark. After 6 d4 (Keres analyses 6 ♘xg4 d5 7 d4! dxe4 8 ♗xf4 ♕xd4 9 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 10 c3 ♗xg4 11 cxd4 ♘c6 12 ♗b5 0-0-0 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 0-0 f6 15 ♘c3 ♖xd4 16 ♖ae1, when White regains one of his pawns and has good play, but he cannot hope to win after say 16...♘e7 17 ♘xe4 ♘d5) 6...♘f6 (6...d6 7 ♘xg4 ♗xg4 8 ♕xg4 ♗xd4 9 ♘c3! is good for White – Gallagher) 7 ♘c3! (this is the reason that 5...♗g7 is out of favour) 7...d6 8 ♘d3 0-0 9 ♘xf4! ♘xe4 (or else Black has a rotten structure for nothing) 10 ♘xe4 ♖e8 11 ♔f2 ♖xe4 12 c3 ♕f6 (again this is do or die, as White intends the simple 13 ♗d3 with advantage) 13 g3 ♗h6 14 ♗d3 ♗xf4 15 ♗xf4 ♖xf4+ 16 gxf4 ♕xf4+ 17 ♔e2! (some precise moves, discovered by Rubinstein, will beat off the attack) 17... g3 18 ♕d2! ♗g4+ 19 ♔e1 g2 20 ♕xg2 ♘c6 21 ♗e2 ♖e8 22 ♖f1! White wins.

Instead of 7 ♘c3! White can play 7 ♗c4, which will almost certainly transpose to Game 12 below, where the opening moves were 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 ♗c4 d5 7 exd5 ♗g7 8 d4 ♘h5. Notice that in this sequence White could not play ♘c3 instead of ♗c4, e.g. at move six, 6 ♘c3? d6! forces 7 ♘d3, which looks silly with the d-pawn still on d2 rather than d4. Therefore, the move order of Game 12 makes more sense than 5...♗g7 straightaway, as it rules out White's strong 7 ♘c3 idea. For analysis of the position after 7 ♗c4, the reader is referred to Game 12.

b) 5...d5. A natural move, but inappropriate here. Black does nothing to challenge the knight on e5 or defend the important f4-pawn. White can get a clear plus with some vigorous moves: 6 d4! ♘f6 7 ♗xf4 ♘xe4 8 ♘d2! ♘xd2 9 ♕xd2 ♗g7 (if 9...♗d6 White castles queenside then attacks with ♗d3, etc.) 10 ♗h6 and White had a dangerous attack in Teschner-Dahl, Berlin 1946.

c) 5...h5. Every game I have seen after this move has ended in disaster for Black, which is only to be expected. As Bronstein remarks, is there any other variation in which the first piece Black develops is his king's rook? Bronstein himself took apart this variation in a famous game: 6 ♗c4 ♖h7 7 d4 ♗h6 (7...d6 8 ♘xf7!) 8 ♘c3 ♘c6 9 ♘xf7! ♖xf7 10 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 11 ♗xf4! ♗xf4 12 0-0 ♕xh4 13 ♖xf4+ ♔g7 14 ♕d2! d6 15 ♖af1 ♘d8 16 ♘d5 ♗d7 17 e5! dxe5 18 dxe5 ♗c6 19 e6! (as often happens, a pawn advance is the final straw for a beleaguered defence) 19..♗xd5 20 ♖f7+ ♘xf7 21 ♖xf7+ ♔h8

22 ♕c3+ ♘f6 23 ♖xf6 ♕xf6 24 ♕xf6+ ♔h7 25 ♕f5+ ♔h6 26 ♕xd5 ♔g6 27 ♕d7 1-0 Bronstein-Dubinin, Leningrad 1947.

d) 5...♘c6 6 d4 ♕f6!? (6...♘xe5 7 dxe5 d6 8 ♗xf4 is known to be good for White) was tried in the blindfold game Nunn-Piket, Monaco 1995. Now instead of 7 ♘c3?! ♗b4 8 ♘d3? ♕xd4 when, after 63 moves, the game was won by ... White, 7 ♘xc6 looks good, e.g. 7...dxc6 8 e5 ♕f5 9 ♗d3 ♕d7 10 c3 c5 11 ♗xf4 cxd4 12 cxd4 c5 13 d5! or 7...♕xc6 8 ♗d3 d5 9 0-0 dxe4(?) 10 ♗xe4!

6 ♘xg4 ♘f6

Black continues to harass the white knight. The other possibility 6...♗e7 is the subject of Game 11.

7 ♘f2

The alternative 7 ♘xf6+, which seems to be a better continuation, is the subject of Games 9 and 10. Short, however, has no wish to see his opponent's queen activated after 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 and so retreats his knight. At the same time he defends e4. However, White's plan seems fatally flawed. The knight has made three moves to end up on a square that will prove both aggressively and defensively to be worse than f3. By retreating, White also gives his opponent the free developing move ...♘f6, which means that Black now has a lead in development. This is a dangerous state of affairs for White, since his kingside looks fragile – the pawn on h4 cannot be supported by the g-pawn and Black can attack down the g-file. Of course, if White were able to assume the initiative and capture the pawn on f4 without loss elsewhere, he would have a winning position. However, it is not easy to begin a siege of f4 since White has his own weaknesses to defend and, as we shall soon see, Black's pieces will be developed very rapidly to aggressive squares. Therefore, as stated above, 7 ♘xf6+ seems to be correct.

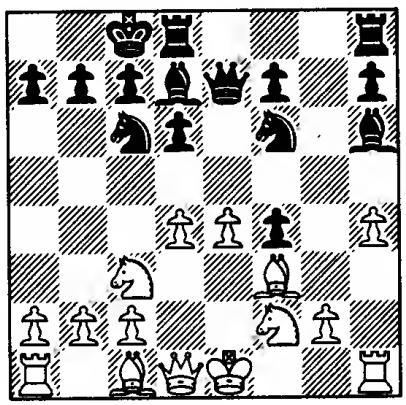
7...♘c6

Black has to play energetically; otherwise the weakness of the doubled f-pawns could lead to a lost position.

8 d4 ♗h6 9 ♗e2

The drawbacks of having the knight on f2 rather than f3 are becoming apparent. With the knight on f3, a good and natural developing move would be 9 ♗d3, but here that simply loses the d4-pawn. Therefore, White plans to put the bishop on f3, where it fortifies e4 and also defends g2 and the kingside in general against ...♖g8. Once e4 is well defended and the kingside secure, White can turn his attention to the f4-pawn.

9...♕e7 10 ♘c3 ♗d7 11 ♗f3 0-0-0



12 a3

This allows Black to dissolve the white centre. Correct was 12 0-0, although Black would have had attack-

ing chances after 12...♖hg8 etc. The weakness of the h4-pawn would greatly abet the attack.

Here we see again the unfortunate situation of the knight on f2. Ideally White would like to castle queenside, but how can he achieve his? Both 12 ♗d2 and 12 ♕e2 lose to 12...♘xd4, while if 12 ♕d3 then 12...♘b4 harasses the queen. With the knight on f3 rather than f2, d4 would be safe and White could continue with ♕e2, ♗d2 and then 0-0-0. It is therefore easy to conclude that 7 ♘f2 has proved unsound.

12...♘xe4! 13 ♘d5

If 13 ♘fxe4 then 13...f5 regains the piece with a clear advantage in development and king safety.

13...♕e8 14 0-0 f5

White's once proud e4-pawn has been replace by a powerful black knight.

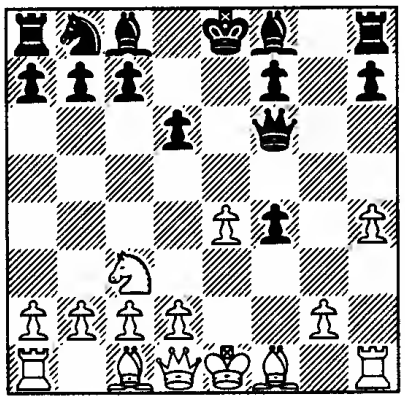
15 c3 ♖g8 16 ♖e1 ♕f7 17 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 18 ♘xf4 ♘e7!

An excellent move, preparing ...♗c6 to put pressure on the vulnerable g2-square. White tries to disrupt the gradual build-up of Black's attack by capturing on e4, but this leads to tactical disaster.

19 ♘xe4 fxe4 20 ♖xe4 d5! 21 ♕b3 ♖df8 22 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 23 ♘xd5 ♕xh4 24 ♘e3 c6 25 ♖f1 ♕g5 26 c4 ♖e8 27 ♘d1 ♕h4 28 d5 ♕d4+ 0-1

Game 9
Nunn-Timman
Amsterdam 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 d6 6 ♘xg4 ♘f6 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 ♘c3



8...c6

Black secures control of d5 to prevent his queen being driven away from its excellent post by 9 ♘d5. The other method was 8...♗e6, which is considered in Game 10.

9 ♕f3

Instead 9 d4 could be answered by 9...♗g7, when d4 is hard to defend. White therefore tries a more restrained approach, intending ♕f3, d2-d3 and ♘e2 to win the f4-pawn. Black has to respond energetically by utilising the g-file.

9...♖g8

Not 9...♗h6? because of 10 g4! with a clear advantage to White. This trick to exploit the pin on the f-pawn to straighten out White's pawn structure is well worth knowing. Sometimes it occurs in a different form, when White has played d2-d4, threatening ♗xf4, and Black has defended the f4-pawn with ...♗h6. Then, if the bishop on h6 is undefended, a diagonal pin can also be exploited with g2-g4!

10 ♕f2

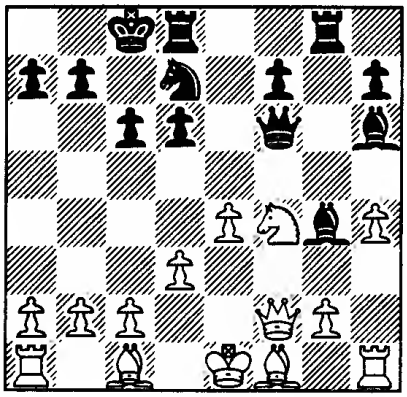
A finesse, but there seems nothing wrong with he immediate 10 d3.

However, if 10 ♘e2 then 10...♘a6!? with the idea of 11...♘b4 looks awkward for White.

10...♗g4 11 d3 ♗h6 12 ♘e2 ♘d7

It would be bad to play 12...f3 13 ♗xh6.

13 ♘xf4 0-0-0



White has won the weak f4-pawn and if he succeeds in consolidating he will be winning. However, his development has suffered badly. In particular his king's position is alarming. Where can his king seek refuge? He cannot very well castle queenside because moving the bishop on c1 allows ...♕xb2. And besides, first of all the black bishop would have to be driven way from the g4-square where it controls d1, which would not prove easy. It is also dangerous to stay in the centre, since Black can prepare the line opening ...f7-f5 or ...d6-d5 pawn advances. This leaves the kingside, which is not very appealing since Black will have a readymade attack along the g-file. Nevertheless, castling kingside is clearly White's best option. Black can attack but at least there are many white defenders at hand.

14 g3

Before White can castle he has to work out how to develop his bishop on f1, since after 14 ♗e2 ♗xf4 both 15 ♗xf4 ♗xe2 16 ♔xe2 ♕xb2 and 15 ♕xf4 ♕xf4 16 ♗xf4 ♗xe2 17 ♔xe2 ♖xg2+ are unsatisfactory. He decides to fianchetto, but further weaknesses are created on g3 and f3.

14...♕e5!

This clears the way for a pawn attack on White's centre. The position is now very sharp and unclear.

15 ♗g2

The pawn snatch 15 ♕xa7 is dangerous, e.g. 15...♗f3 16 ♖g1 f5 - Korchnoi.

15...f5 16 0-0 fxe4 17 ♗d2?

After 17 ♗xe4 ♖df8 Black would have good play for the pawn, e.g. if the rash 18 ♕xa7? then 18...♗h3! 19 ♖f3 ♗xf4 wins for Black. However, after a sensible reply such as 18 ♗g2 Black would find it very difficult to break through on the kingside, especially as he has no more pawn thrusts at his disposal. Chances would remain balanced.

17...♗f3!

Black seizes the chance to exchange off the light-squared bishops. This favours him in two ways. First, the exchange clears the way for a rook assault against g3. And second, although White's pawns on g3 and h4 and the knight on f4 are well entrenched on the dark squares, the light squares such as f3, g4 and h3 have been compromised. With the disappearance of White's light-squared bishop these squares become severely weak.

18 ♖ae1 ♖df8 19 dxe4

If 19 ♗xf3 then 19...♗xf4 20 ♗xf4

♕xf4 and the g-pawn drops.

19...♗xg2 20 ♔xg2 ♖g4 21 ♔h3

In order to defend g3 next move with a rook.

21...♖fg8 22 ♖g1 ♘f6

The knight joins in the attack and threatens e4. Black's onslaught now increases in intensity until the fragile white kingside collapses.

23 ♕f3 ♕e7 24 ♖g2 ♗xf4 25 ♗xf4 ♕e6 26 ♔h2 ♘h5 27 ♖ee2

No better is 27 ♗g5 h6.

27...♖f8! 28 ♖ef2 ♘xf4 29 gxf4 ♖xh4+ 30 ♔g1 ♕xa2!

Unexpectedly the final breakthrough occurs on the queenside. Now White's only chance was 31 ♖g4, but in any case the game was not to be saved.

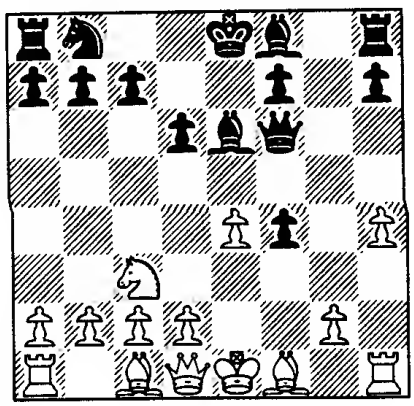
31 ♕g3 ♕b1+ 32 ♖f1 ♖h1+ 33 ♔xh1 ♕xf1+ 34 ♖g1 ♕xf4 35 ♕h3+ ♔b8 36 ♕xh7 a6 37 ♖g8 ♕c1+ 0-1

Game 10

Gallagher-Bryson

Hastings 1994

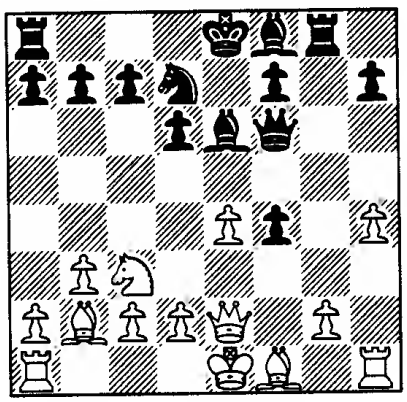
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 d6 6 ♘xg4 ♘f6 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 ♘c3 ♗e6



Black develops and protects the d5-square. For 8...c6 see the previous game.

9 ♕f3

An important moment. The main alternative is 9 ♕e2, as recommended by Gallagher in his book. This threatens 10 ♕b5+ and rules out 9...♘c6 because of 10 ♘d5. Then a critical position is reached after 9...♘d7 10 b3 (this is virtually the only way to develop the bishop) 10...♖g8 11 ♗b2.



Does White have the advantage or is Black's counterplay sufficient? There are two variations to analyse:

a) 11...0-0-0 12 0-0-0 ♗g4 13 ♕f2 ♗xd1 14 ♕xa7 ♗g4 15 ♗a6 ♘c5 16 ♗b5 ♘d7? 17 ♘d5 ♕e6 18 ♗c6! and White wins. This pretty variation is given by Gallagher. However, he mentions, but doesn't analyse, 16...c6! This looks no better than unclear for White, e.g. 17 ♘d5 ♕xb2+! 18 ♔xb2 ♗g7+ 19 ♔b1 cxd5 20 exd5 with an unusual material balance. Nevertheless, White can get the advantage after 11...0-0-0. Simply 12 ♕f2!, attacking a7 and planning 0-0-0 next move, gives him a good game.

b) 11...♗g4! 12 ♕f2 d5 13 ♗e2 ♗c5

14 ♕f1 ♗xe2 (14...dxe4 15 ♗xg4 ♖xg4 16 0-0-0 ♗d4 17 ♖e1 looks a little better for White) 15 ♕xe2 0-0-0 16 0-0-0 dxe4 17 ♘xe4 and after 17...♕g6? 18 ♕c4! White obtained the better chances in De La Villa-Fernandez, Barcelona 1990. He is attacking the bishop and also has the positional threat of 19 ♘g5. Instead, 17...♕c6! looks much better, since it defends the bishop and has an x-ray attack on g2 through the knight on e4, which is precariously placed. I can't see any advantage for White here.

9...♗h6

The reason why 9 ♕f3 has long been discredited is 9...♖g8! 10 ♕f2 ♘c6 11 ♗b5 (or else 11...♘d4 follows strongly) 11...0-0-0! 12 ♗xc6 bxc6 13 d3 (13 ♕xa7 ♖xg2 gives Black the stronger attack) 13...♗h6 in De La Villa-Fernandez, Salamanca 1990. That game continued 14 ♖f1 ♖g4 15 g3 ♕g7 16 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 17 gxf4 ♖g2, when Black's initiative offered him at least a draw. Gallagher mentions this game in his book, yet here he plays 9 ♕f3 anyway. It would be intriguing to know what improvement he had in mind.

10 ♘b5

This moves looks a little odd since White embarks on a tactical adventure with his queenside undeveloped. However, Gallagher has prepared a forcing variation that seeks to exploit some concrete features of the position. Note that if Black had played 9...♖g8, 10 ♘b5 would fail to 10...♘a6 11 d4 c6, since the d6-pawn is defended by the bishop.

10...♘a6 11 d4 0-0

Here 11...0-0-0 is bad after 12 ♘xa7+ ♔b8(?) 13 ♘c6+ bxc6 14 ♗xa6. However, a critical alternative is 11...♖g8 12 e5 ♕g6!? (not 12...dxe5 13 ♕xb7). Now White can try 13 h5, when 13...♕xc2? 14 ♘a3!! wins Black's queen. However, 13...♕g4 14 exd6 c6 15 ♘c7+ ♘xc7 16 dxc7 ♔d7 is unclear. Probably his best chance is 13 ♘xd6+, when 13... cxd6 14 ♗xa6 dxe5 15 ♗xb7 ♖d8 gives complications which seem to favour White.

12 g4

This seeks to achieve a bind on the position. If Black does nothing fast then White will develop his pieces and pick off the f4-pawn. Therefore an aggressive response is required from Black.

12...♕e7 13 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 14 ♕xf4 f5!

Black's counterplay comes just in time. White now finds that he cannot hold on to his e-pawn in view of the vulnerable position of his king.

15 gxf5 ♗xf5 16 ♘c3 ♖ae8 17 0-0-0

If 17 ♗d3 ♗xe4!, while 17 ♗xa6 bxa6 doesn't help.

17...♗xe4 18 ♖g1+ ♔h8 19 ♕xe4 ♕xe4 20 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 21 ♗g2 ♖e2 22 ♖de1

Black has enough activity to draw.

22...♖ef2 23 ♗xb7 ♘b4 24 ♖g2 c6 25 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 26 ♖e8+ ♔g7 27 a3 ♘xc2 28 ♗xc6 ♘xd4 29 ♗d5 ♘e2+ 30 ♔b1 ♘f4 31 ♗c6 ♔f6 32 ♖a8 ♘d3 33 ♗e4 ½-½

Game 11

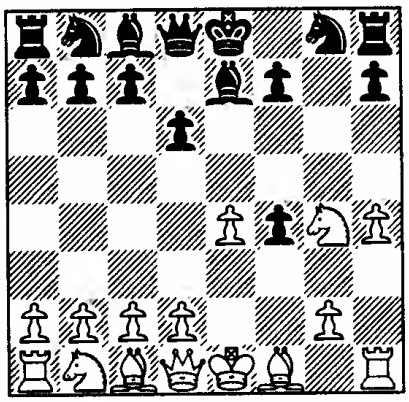
Winants-Z.Almasi

Wijk aan Zee 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4

5 ♘e5 d6 6 ♘xg4 ♗e7

A logical move which seeks to gain time by attacking the h-pawn.



7 d3!?

This new idea was suggested by Gallagher and received its first international test in this game. Previously White had played 7 d4, but Black had good counterplay after 7...♗xh4+ 8 ♘f2 ♕g5! 9 ♕f3 (the natural move, threatening 10 ♗xf4 or 10 ♕xf4) 9...♘c6! 10 ♕xf4! ♗xf2+ 11 ♔xf2 ♕xf4+ 12 ♗xf4 ♘xd4 13 ♘c3! ♗e6 (not 13...♘xc2? 14 ♘d5 ♔d8 [14...♘xa1 15 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 16 ♘xa8 ♘c2 17 ♗xd6] 15 ♖c1 and White is better - Bangiev) 14 ♘b5 ♘xb5 15 ♗xb5+ ♗d7. White has compensation for the pawn - the two bishops and lead in development - but this is not a serious winning attempt. The game Shumilin-Voikov, Correspondence 1989, went 16 ♗c4 and here a draw was agreed. Curiously, Gallagher-Neffe, Hamburg 1995, went instead 7 ♕f3 but then transposed to the above variation after 7...♗xh4+ 8 ♘f2 ♕g5 9 d4. Now 9...♘c6! is the Shumilin game. Instead, Neffe played 9...♗g3? 10 ♘c3 ♘f6 11 ♗d3 ♖g8 (11...♗g4 12 ♕xg3 fxg3 13 ♗xg5 gxf2+ 14 ♔xf2 is clearly good for White) 12 ♔f1! ♘c6 (too late!) 13 ♘e2 ♗g4 14 ♘xg4 ♕xg4 15 c3 0-0-0 16 ♕xg4+ ♘xg4 17 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 18 ♘xf4. White has regained his pawn and now enjoys the advantages of a better centre, a bishop against a knight, and lots of weak black pawns to attack. Needless to say, Gallagher's technique was relentless.

7...♗xh4+ 8 ♘f2 ♕g5 9 ♕d2

Bangiev claims that 9 ♕f3!? is interesting. Then there is a more or less forced sequence 9...♗g3 10 ♘c3 ♘c6 (10...♗g4?! 11 ♕xg3!) 11 ♘e2. White has the edge after both 11...♗xf2+ 12 ♕xf2 and 11...♘e5 12 ♕xg3!, so Black has to speculate with 11...♘b4!? 12 ♔d1 ♕c5 (probably better is 12...♘xc2!? 13 ♔xc2 ♕c5+ 14 ♔d1 ♗xf2 15 ♗xf4 with unclear play) 13 c3 ♕xf2 14 ♕xf2 ♗xf2 15 cxb4 ♗e3 16 ♘xf4 ♗xc1 17 ♖xc1 c6 18 ♘h5 and White has the initiative (analysis by Bangiev).

9...♗g3 10 ♘c3 ♘f6

Developing and preventing 11 ♘d5.

11 ♘e2

This threatens 12 ♘xf4. Almasi sees that 11...♘g4, pinning f2, loses a piece to 12 ♘xg3 and therefore prepares this move with

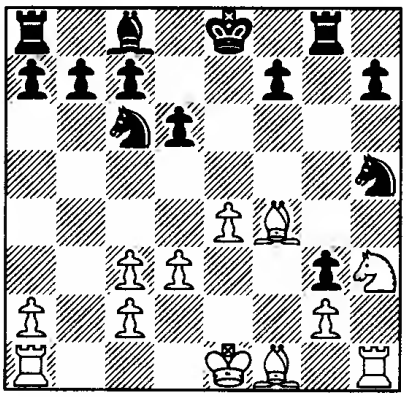
11...♕e5!?

This improves on Gallagher's analysis, which runs 11...♗xf2+ 12 ♔xf2 ♘g4+ 13 ♔g1 ♘e3 14 ♘xf4 ♘xf1 15 ♔xf1 and Black has a very inferior position as his weaknesses remain and his dynamism has vanished. Almasi's idea is to answer 12 ♘xf4 with 12...♘g4!, which certainly looks very awkward for White.

12 ♘xg3 fxg3 13 ♘h3 ♘c6 14 ♕c3

Clearing the way for the c1-bishop.

14...♖g8 15 ♗f4 ♕xc3+ 16 bxc3 ♘h5



The endgame is difficult to assess. Black still has the gambit pawn but White has a strong dark-squared bishop. The key question is whether Black can convert his kingside pawns from a defensive liability into a dynamic, game-winning unit. Since at the moment the pawns are dislocated and unable to support each other, this seems unlikely. However, in the coming struggle Almasi plays with great determination and exploits some errors by his opponent. Probably Black is slightly better in this position, since it is easier to imagine Black winning than White. This casts doubt on the idea of 9 ♕d2 – Bangiev's 9 ♕f3 looks like a better try.

17 ♗e3 ♗g4 18 ♗e2 ♘e5 19 ♔d2 ♗xe2 20 ♔xe2 ♘f6 21 ♖af1 ♘fg4 22 ♗f4

Here 22 ♗g1!? seems like a better try, e.g. 22...♔e7 23 ♘f4 h6 24 ♖h3 with unclear play – Bangiev.

22...♘h2 23 ♖b1 0-0-0 24 ♔d2?

Now Black gains a serious advantage. White had to eliminate the g-pawn with 24 ♗xg3!, when Bangiev gives the variation 24...♖xg3 25 ♖xh2 ♘g4 26 ♖hh1 f5 (26...♖xg2+? 27 ♔f3) 27 ♘f4 fxe4 28 ♖xh7 as unclear.

24...h5 25 d4 h4!

The black kingside now looks compact. Of course 26 dxe5 dxe5+ would be very bad for White. There now follows a gritty positional battle in which Black eventually proves the value of the kingside pawns.

26 ♖be1 f6 27 ♖e2 ♘eg4 28 ♖b1 a6 29 c4 ♖de8 30 ♔d3 ♖gf8 31 ♖be1 ♔d7 32 c3 ♖e7 33 a4 b6 34 a5 bxa5 35 ♖a1 ♖b8 36 ♖xa5 ♖b1 37 c5 ♖f1 38 cxd6 cxd6 39 ♖xa6 ♘f2+ 40 ♘xf2 gxf2 41 ♖xf2?

White could still have defended with 41 ♖xd6+ ♔e8 42 ♖d2! – Bangiev.

41...♖xf2 42 ♗xh2 h3!

The triumph of the black kingside pawns is complete. The f-pawn costs White the exchange and soon the h-pawn will cost him a piece.

43 ♖xd6+ ♔e8 44 e5 ♖xg2 45 ♗f4 h2 46 ♗xh2 ♖xh2 47 ♖xf6 ♖h3+ 48 ♔e4 ♖xc3 49 ♖a6 ♖h7 50 ♖a8+ ♔d7 51 ♔d5 ♖h5 52 ♖g8 ♖a3 53 ♖g7+ ♔e8 54 ♖g4 ♖a5+ 55 ♔e4 ♔f7 56 ♖f4+ ♔e7 57 ♖g4 ♖h1 58 ♖g7+ ♔f8 59 ♖d7 ♔e8 60 ♖d6 ♔e7 61 ♔d3 ♖h4 62 ♔c3 ♖a3+ 63 ♔c4 ♖a8 64 ♔c5 ♖d8 65 ♖xd8 ♔xd8 66 d5 ♔d7 0-1

Game 12

Winants-Van der Sterren

Wijk aan Zee 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4

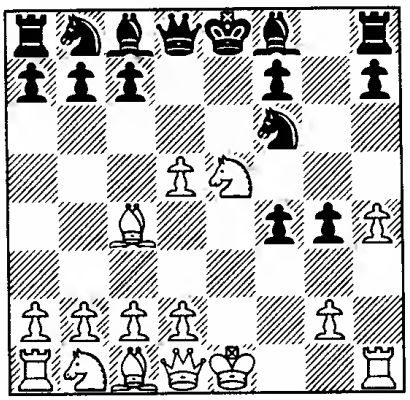
5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 ♗c4

The most aggressive response to 5...♘f6. The more solid 6 d4 is considered in Games 15-17 below.

6...d5

This is virtually forced in view of the attack on f7. It has long been known that 6...♕e7 is bad, e.g. 7 d4 d6 8 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 9 ♗xf4 dxe5 10 dxe5+ ♗d7 11 ♗b3 ♕b4+ 12 ♘d2 ♘xe4 13 c3 ♘xc3 14 ♗g5+ with a clear advantage to White (Korchnoi and others).

7 exd5



7...♗g7

The alternative 7...♗d6 is the subject of the next game. Which of these bishop moves is the stronger? The fianchetto is of great value, since the bishop will exert strong pressure against the d4-pawn in the future. It also strengthens the black kingside, which means that the king will be secure there. The drawback is that, compared to 7.....♗d6, Black leaves the c7- and f4-pawns undefended. As we shall see, White can try to exploit this with a later ♘b5.

It should be mentioned that this position can also be reached via an alternative move order beginning 5...♗g7. This is examined in the notes to move five in Game 8.

8 d4 ♘h5

The alternative is 8...0-0, but after 9 0-0 both 9...♘h5 10 ♘xg4 ♕xh4 11 ♘h2 and 9...♘xd5 10 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 11 ♘c3 ♕d8 12 ♗xf4 ♕xh4 13 ♘d5 are good for White – Gallagher.

9 0-0 ♕xh4 10 ♕e1!

White has to force the exchange of queens, as Black's coming attack with 11...♘g3 etc. looks dangerous.

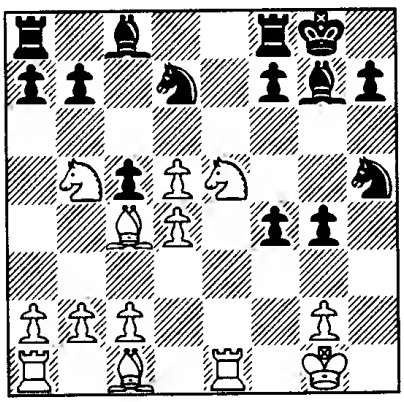
10...♕xe1 11 ♖xe1 0-0 12 ♘c3 ♘d7

Black's strategy is to undermine the knight on e5.

13 ♘b5

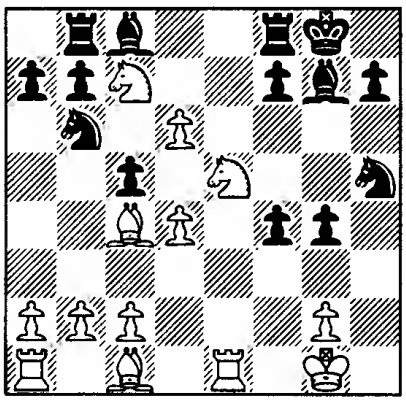
This is very logical as it attacks the most vulnerable point in Black's position.

13...c5!?



The consistent move, attacking the defender of e5. However, theory suggests that there is a problem with this move, viz. the variation 14 ♘c7 ♖b8 15 d6! cxd4 16 ♘xf7! and White wins, e.g. 16...♖xf7 17 ♖e7 ♘e5 18 ♖e8+ ♗f8 19 ♖xe5 etc. Since White avoided this variation in the game and as far as I know the players have never revealed their thoughts in annotations,

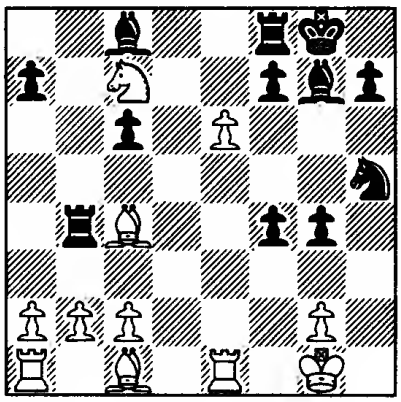
we have to try to discover for ourselves what improvement Van der Sterren might have prepared. Perhaps it was 14 ♘c7 ♖b8 15 d6 ♘b6!?



Now the critical line is 16 dxc5 ♘xc4 17 ♘xc4 ♗d4+ 18 ♔h2 (after 18 ♔h1? ♗xc5 19 ♖e5 Black has at least a draw by perpetual with 19...♘g3+). Black would lose a piece after 18...♗xc5? 19 ♖e5, and the aggressive 18...g3+ 19 ♔h1 f3 20 gxf3 ♗h3 fails to 21 ♗e3. More interesting is 18...♗f2, but White has good compensation for the exchange after 19 ♖e5 f5 20 ♘d5 f3 21 gxf3 ♗g3+ 22 ♔g2 ♗xe5 23 ♘xe5. Therefore, Black has to try 18...b5!? 19 cxb6 (forced, as if the knight moves Black can capture on c5: 19 ♘a5 ♗xc5 20 ♖e5 ♗xd6) 19...axb6 20 ♖d1 (20 d7 ♗b7) 20...♗f2 21 d7 ♗b7 and Black has good attacking chances against White's king after ...f4-f3 etc.

So it seems that 13...c5 stands up to analytical scrutiny. However, Black also has an alternative move, 13...c6. According to Gallagher the critical variation is now 14 dxc6 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 bxc6 16 ♘c7 ♖b8 17 e6 ♖b4!

see following diagram



His analysis runs 18 e7? (18 exf7+ ♔h8 19 ♗e6 ♗xe6 20 ♘xe6 ♖xf7 is good for Black) 18...♗d4+ 19 ♔h2 (or 19 ♔h1 ♖xc4 20 exf8♕+ ♔xf8 21 ♖e8+ ♔g7 22 ♖xc8 ♘g3+ 23 ♔h2 ♘f1+ 24 ♔h1 ♖c5 25 g3 ♖h5+ 26 ♔g2 f3+ 27 ♔xf1 ♖h1 mate) 19...g3+ 20 ♔h1 ♖xc4 21 exf8♕+ ♔xf8 22 ♖e8+ ♔g7 23 ♖xc8 f3 24 c3 f2 25 ♗g5 ♗f6 26 ♘e8+ ♔g6 27 ♘xf6 ♔xg5 and Black wins. Here we see the strength of Black's attack against the white king if White loses control. Despite White's big material advantage, he will lose the game because his king has become entombed on the h-file.

Gallagher suggests 18 ♗b3! but doesn't provide any analysis. I suspect that White is also in trouble here, e.g. 18...fxe6 19 ♘xe6 (if 19 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 20 ♘xe6 ♖e8 White is a pawn down and pinned) 19...♖xb3! 20 axb3 (20 ♘xf8 ♖g3! and if the knight moves to safety 21...f3 obliterates the kingside) 20...♖e8 21 ♖a5!? ♗d4+ 22 ♘xd4 (22 ♔h2 ♘g7!) 22...♖xe1+ 23 ♔f2 ♖xc1 24 ♖xh5 ♖d1 25 ♘xc6 ♖d2+ and Black has every chance to win the endgame after 26 ♔e1 ♖xc2 or 26 ♔g1 ♗b7.

Finally we should consider 13...c6

14 ♘c7 when, since 14...♖b8 15 d6 is bad, Black has to offer the exchange with 14...cxd5! In R.Byrne-Keres, USA-USSR 1955, White took the bait and after 15 ♘xa8? dxc4 16 ♗d2 ♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♗f5 18 ♘c7 Keres claims a large advantage for Black with 18...♖d8 19 ♗c3 ♗xc2. Instead of accepting the exchange, Glaskov recommends 15 ♗xd5! ♖b8 16 c3 ♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♖d8 18 e6 fxe6 19 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 20 ♘xe6 ♖e8 21 ♗xf4 with a fairly equal position.

14 c3

After this defensive move all the complicated variations above are left behind. However, White cannot count on gaining any advantage as Black can rapidly mobilise his pieces.

14...cxd4 15 cxd4 ♘b6 16 ♗b3 ♗d7!

The attack on the white knight is awkward. Of course, White has no wish to exchange off his strong knight on e5 for the bishop. In Welling-Zagema, Holland 1995, White tried the spectacular 17 ♘c7? ♖ac8 18 ♘e6!? However, Black calmly replied 18...♖fe8!, not allowing the bishop on b3 to be unleashed after 18...fxe6 19 dxe6. There followed 19 ♘g5 f6 20 d6+, which looks pretty strong as it is mate after both 20...♔f8 21 ♘xh7 and 20...♔h8 21 ♘ef7+ ♔g8 22 ♘h6+ ♔h8 23 ♘gf7. But Black confounded his opponent's plans once again with 20...♘c4!! And this is only to be expected. Every black piece is in play, whilst the white rook on a1 and the bishop on c1 are still slumbering. Why should White be able to win by a direct attack? The game continued 21 ♗xc4+ ♖xc4 22 ♘xc4 ♖xe1+ 23 ♔f2 fxg5 23 ♘e5+ ♔f8 24 ♘xd7+ ♔e8 25 ♔xe1 ♔xd7 and in a matter of moves White lost both of his d-pawns.

In our main game White tries a more solid move.

17 a4 ♖ad8

This contains a latent threat to the d-pawn (18...♗xb5) which persuades White to move his knight. But not to a7, since 18 ♘xa7? loses a piece after 18...♖a8.

18 ♘c7 ♗f6!

Black finds an excellent way to activate his bishop.

19 ♗d2

This threatens to win the exchange with 20 ♗b4.

19...♗h4 20 ♖ec1

Here 20 ♖ed1 was interesting, when 20...♗e7 or 20...♘c8!? 21 ♗b4 ♗e7 were possible continuations.

20...♘g3 21 ♖e1 ♘f5 22 ♖e4 ♘g3 23 ♖ee1 ♘f5 ½-½

A curious finish. White's rook has to defend d4 and cannot capture on f4 because of a fork on e2. Meanwhile, Black is threatened with ♗b4 or ♗xf4, so he also has to repeat. A case of both sides standing badly!

Game 13
Grasso-Pampa
Correspondence 1995

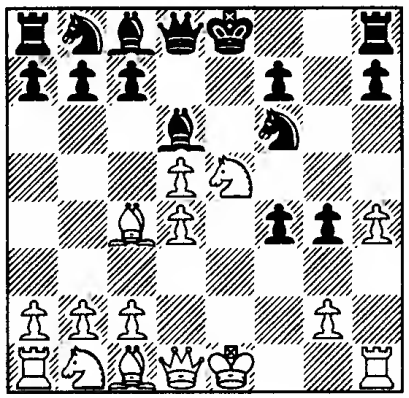
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 ♗c4 d5 7 exd5 ♗d6

The alternative bishop development.

8 d4

Now Black has a choice between the game continuation 8...0-0! and

8...♘h5 (see the next game).



8...0-0!

The theoretical assessment of this line favours Black, based on the game De La Villa-Am.Rodriguez, Bayamo 1991, which continued 9 0-0 ♘h5 10 ♘xg4 ♕xh4 11 ♘h2 ♘g3 12 ♖e1 ♗f5! and Black obtained a good game after a subsequent ...♘d7 and doubling of rooks on the e-file. Here it is also worth mentioning the sharp 12...f3?, which according to theory fails after 13 ♘xf3 ♕h1+ 14 ♔f2 ♘e4+ 15 ♔e3 ♕h6+ 16 ♔d3 (16 ♔xe4 allows mate in two) 16...♕g6 17 ♖xe4 ♗f5 18 ♘bd2 ♖e8 19 ♔c3 ♗xe4 20 ♘xe4 ♕xe4 21 ♕h1! and White's attacking chances and safer king are supposedly worth more than the exchange. This line received a test in the game Olesen-Kristensen, Copenhagen 1995, which continued 21...f6 (to defend against 22 ♗d3, hitting h7 through the queen) 22 ♗d3 ♕e7 23 ♕h5 ♘d7 24 ♗h6 c5 25 dxc6 bxc6 26 ♔d2 (a precaution against 26...♗b4+) 26...♖ad8 27 ♖h1 c5 and Black achieved counterplay. However, 27 ♖h1 was a little stereotyped. Instead 27 ♖e1! appears to win at once as 27...♕f7 28 ♗c4! ♕xc4 29 ♕g4+ leads to mate. Therefore, it seems that the question mark after 12...f3 is justified.

Nevertheless, the problem of 12...♗f5! still remains.

In our main game White decided to avoid all this by reintroducing a long discredited move.

9 ♗xf4!? ♘h5 10 g3

If 10 0-0? ♕xh4 11 ♗h6 ♖e8! with decisive threats including 12...♖xe5 13 dxe5 ♗c5+ – Gallagher.

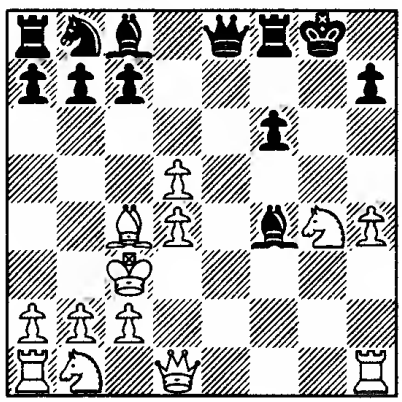
10...f6 11 ♘xg4!?

This is the first new move of the game, diverging from Pillsbury-Chigorin, Vienna 1903, which went 11 ♘d3 ♘xg3 12 ♗xg3 ♗xg3+ 13 ♔f1 ♕e8 with a clear advantage to Black.

11...♕e8+

11...♘xg3 is inaccurate, as 12 ♗xg3 ♗xg3+ 13 ♔d2 ♗f4+ would leave Black a tempo down on the game.

12 ♔d2 ♘xf4 13 gxf4 ♗xf4+ 14 ♔c3



Here we see that capturing the g-pawn with 11 ♘xg4 has two distinct advantages over Pillsbury's 11 ♘d3. First, White can attack Black along the newly opened g-file and second, White no longer has to fear an endgame. In

fact, he would have winning chances due to his extra pawn. However, the endgame is a long way off. Meanwhile, White's king is in a very odd position. The question is whether White can mobilise his queenside pieces while at the same time fending off an attack, which will be abetted by Black's queenside pawns and bishop pair.

14...b5

If 14...h5 15 ♕f3 is similar.

15 ♕f3!

Sometimes attack is the best form of defence. Now Black cannot avoid the exchange of his important dark-squared bishop, as 15...♗d6 16 ♘xf6+ is disastrous. However, he finds an excellent riposte.

15...h5! 16 ♕xf4 hxg4

Black has sold his prize bishop at a high price, as now the g-file is closed and his king is much safer than his opponent's. The g-pawn could also become valuable in the endgame. However, Black is still hoping to win by a middlegame attack on the exposed white king.

17 ♗b3 a5

Threatening 18...a4.

18 a4

The check 18 d6+ would merely open up the c6-square for the black queen.

18...b4+

If 18...bxa4 19 ♖xa4! brings the white rook into the game.

19 ♔d2

Now the knight on b1 and the rook on a1 are temporarily stalemated. There now follows an arms race: can Black develop his queenside and strike a fatal blow before White succeeds in freeing his queenside?

19...♕d7

It turns out that Black also has problems with his king, since there is no good way to dodge the coming discovered check, e.g. 19...♔h8? 20 ♕h6+ ♔g8 21 d6+ or 19...♔g7 20 ♕xc7+. Also 20 ♕h6!?, intending 21 e6+, looks unpleasant. So Black forces White's hand by preparing 20...♔g7 or 20...♗b7.

20 d6+?!

After 20 ♕h6! Black has nothing better than 20...♕d6 to block the discovered check. White then has the luxury of a choice between forcing perpetual with 21 ♕g6+ or playing to win with 21 ♔c1, preparing 22 ♘d2 or 22 ♘c4. If this analysis holds up, then 9 ♗xf4 revives White's chances in the 8...0-0 variation.

20...♔g7 21 dxc7 ♘a6 22 h5 ♘xc7 23 h6+ ♔h8 24 ♔c1 ♘e6 25 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 26 ♘d2 ♖e8?!

This threatens a back-rank mate, but according to Grasso 26...♗b7 was stronger. Then 27 ♖g1 ♖g8 looks unclear, but not 27...♖ac8 28 ♕xg4! ♖g8 29 ♕xe6 ♖xg1+ 30 ♘f1 ♖xf1+ 31 ♔d2 ♖f2+ 32 ♔e1 ♖cxc2 33 ♖c1! and White wins.

27 ♘b3 ♖a6 28 ♔b1

Of course, if 28 ♘c5 ♕d5 attacks h1.

28...♕d5 29 ♔a2

White has a clear advantage due to his ascendancy over the dark squares and his safer king.

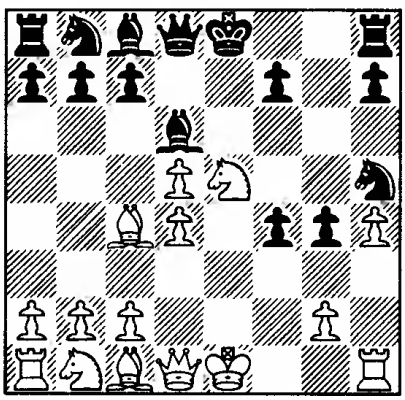
29...♗d7 30 ♖ae1 ♗xa4 31 ♖xe8+ ♗xe8 32 ♕xg4 ♕f7 33 ♔b1 ♗d7 34 ♕f4 ♖a8 35 ♖g1 ♖g8 36 ♖xg8+ ♔xg8

37 ♘xa5 ♔h7 38 ♕d6 f5 39 ♘b3 f4 40 ♘d2 f3 41 ♘xf3 ♕xf3 42 ♕xd7+ ♔xh6 43 ♕e6+ 1-0

Game 14
K.Kristensen-Sorensen
Copenhagen 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 ♗c4 d5 7 exd5 ♗d6 8 d4 ♘h5

Black defends f4 and attacks h4 without further ado.



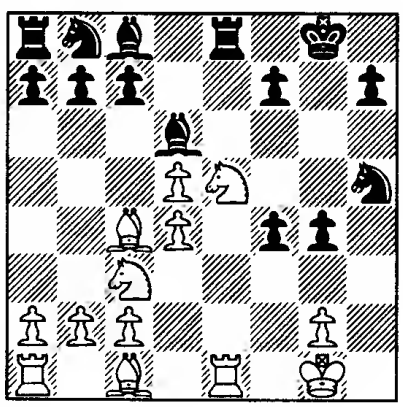
9 0-0 ♕xh4 10 ♕e1!

Compare this with Game 12. White welcomes the exchange of queens to secure his king from a mating attack. He trusts in his sounder pawn structure, slight lead in development and strong knight on e5 to compensate for the missing pawn.

10...♕xe1 11 ♖xe1 0-0 12 ♘c3 ♖e8?!

A critical moment. It was better to challenge the knight on e5 immediately with 12...♘d7! Then 13 ♘xg4 ♘b6 14 ♗e2 ♖e8! looked at least equal for Black in Riemersma-Van der Sterren, Holland 1993. The threat is 15...♗xg4, and if 15 ♘f2 then 15...♘g3 (15...♗f5) 16 ♗d2 ♘xe2+ 17 ♖xe2 ♖xe2 18 ♘xe2 ♘xd5 wins a pawn. White could find nothing better than 15 ♘e5, when 15...♗xe5 16 dxe5 ♖xe5 17 ♗d2 ♗d7 18 ♗f3 ♖ae8 19 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 20 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 21 ♗xe1 ♘f6 22 ♗d2 ♘c4 23 ♗xf4 ♘xb2 24 ♗xc7 ♘c4 gave Black some winning chances in the endgame, as White's queenside pawns are all weak.

12...♗f5 is less good, when Gallagher claims an advantage for White after both 13 ♗d3 ♗xe5 14 ♖xe5! ♗xd3 15 ♖xh5 ♗xc2 16 ♖g5+ ♗g6 17 ♖xg4 ♘a6 18 ♗xf4 and 13 ♘e4 ♗xe4 14 ♖xe4 f6 15 ♘xg4 f5 16 ♘h6+ ♔g7 17 ♖e6 ♖f6 18 ♖xf6 ♔xf6 19 ♗d3! White's knight is trapped on h6, but after 19...♘g3 or 19...♘g7 to guard f5, White can use the c-pawn to deflect the bishop on d6 from the defence of f4. White's knight should eventually be freed after a subsequent ♗xf4. Gallagher gives the possible continuation 19...♘g7 20 c4 c5 21 b4!? cxd4 22 ♗b2 ♗e5 23 g4!? with unclear play, but I prefer White.



13 ♗d2!

The lack of pressure on e5 gives White time to devise a plan to destroy

Black's hold on d6.

13...♗f5

Perhaps Black should have tried 13...♘d7 14 ♘xg4 ♖xe1+ 15 ♖xe1 ♘b6, but the game has ceased to be of theoretical interest.

14 ♘b5! ♘d7 15 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 16 ♘xd6 cxd6 17 ♗b4!

Now d6 is indefensible. White therefore acquires a strong passed pawn which, supported by the two bishops, gives him a decisive advantage.

17...♗f5 18 ♗xd6 ♗xc2 19 ♗e7 ♗a4 20 d6 ♘g7 21 ♖e4 ♘e6 22 ♗xe6 fxe6 23 ♖xf4 h5 24 ♖e1 ♖ac8 25 ♖e5 ♖c1+ 26 ♔h2 ♔g7 27 ♖xh5 1-0

There is no good defence against the threat of 28 ♖xg4+ ♔f7 29 ♖h7 mate.

Game 15

Matsuura-Van Riemsdijk

Brazil 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 d4

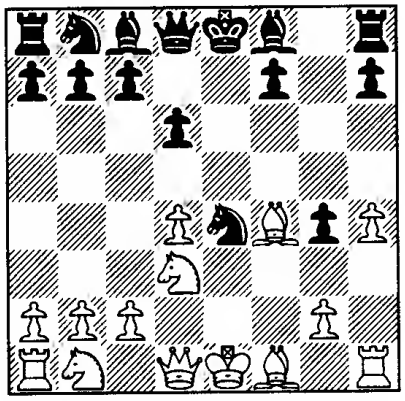
This is the main alternative to 6 ♗c4.

6...d6 7 ♘d3 ♘xe4

7...f3 is the subject of Game 17.

8 ♗xf4

White's play may seem confusing to a player unfamiliar with the positional complexities of the King's Gambit. He has exchanged his proud e-pawn for the black f4-pawn, when at move six he could have exchanged it for the black g-pawn (6 ♘xg4 ♘xe4). Surely it makes more sense to capture the g-pawn, leaving Black with a doubled and isolated f4-pawn?



Such reasoning overlooks the relative *dynamic* strength of the f4- and g4-pawns. The g4-pawn is usually a positional nonentity in the Kieseritzky, reducing the scope of the bishop on c8 and depriving the knight of the g4-square. It also obstructs any counterplay based on ...♖g8 (we have already seen the strength of the ...♖g8 attacks in the Shirov and Timman games earlier in the chapter). In effect, the g-pawn only had one purpose in life and that was to defend the f4-spearhead; as soon as it was driven to g4 by White's 4 h4!, it lost most of its value. This explains why in the other main variation Black is happy to sacrifice the g-pawn immediately with 5...d6! in order to gain active play.

The f4-pawn, on the other hand, is often a real nuisance to White. It restricts the bishop on c1 to just one safe square, the unimpressive d2, controls the central e3-square and shuts White out of f4. It also blocks the f-file and so prevents an attack on f7 with ♗c4 and ♖f1 etc. So, although classically weak, from a dynamic view point the f4-pawn has great value: it is the linchpin of Black's position and holds his dark

squares together. That is why White often plays g2-g3, allowing the f-pawn to advance to f3 and become a protected passed pawn. In return, the bishop on c1 gains access to some strong dark squares such as g5 or even h6.

The King's Gambit often revolves around the f4-pawn. Can White dislodge it, or, better still, destroy it? If he can do so at no great loss elsewhere, then he usually has a pleasant game; if the pawn remains firm then it can often choke the life out of White's position.

In the present variation, White solves the problem of the f4-pawn by destroying it immediately. The queen's bishop feels the benefit and is excellently posted on f4. On the other hand, the loss of the e-pawn is an enormous positional concession.

The other move 8 ♕e2 is examined in the notes to Game 16 below.

8...♗g7!

As usual, this bishop proves very strong when it can be fianchettoed.

9 c3

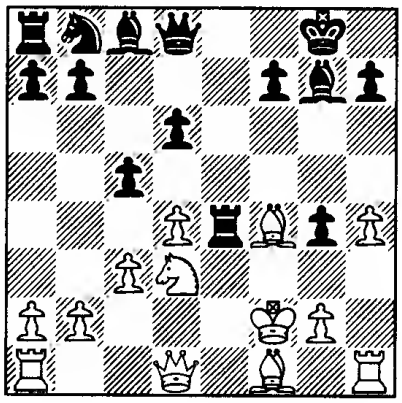
White's main aims are to drive the knight away from e4 and defend d4. In the famous game Spassky-Fischer, Mar Del Plata 1960, he tried to combine both ideas with 9 ♘c3?! However, after 9...♘xc3 10 bxc3 c5! (the thematic move, striking at White's centre) 11 ♗e2 cxd4 12 0-0 ♘c6 13 ♗xg4 0-0 14 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 15 ♕g4 Black could have played 15...♔h8 with a good position (Fischer).

Therefore, White safeguards his centre.

9...0-0

This had been thought dubious, but in view of Black's improvement at move 12, it may in fact be the best move. It avoids the unpleasantness of 9...♕e7 10 ♗e2 (which transposes to the next game).

10 ♘d2 ♖e8 11 ♘xe4 ♖xe4+ 12 ♔f2 c5!



Shades of Fischer! This looks much better than 12...♕f6 13 g3 ♗h6 14 ♕d2!, when White is ready to play 15 ♗g2 with an advantage. It is always good to get pawns involved in an attack!

13 dxc5 dxc5

Black has negated White's space advantage in the centre, activated his queen without even moving having to move it, and opened up the white king to threats along the diagonal a7-g1 (after ...c5-c4 etc.).

14 g3 ♕b6 15 ♗g2

This leads to defeat after some fine play by Black. White had to try 16 ♔g2 (16...c4?! 17 ♘f2 ♕xb2?? 18 ♕d8+), although after 16...♘c6 it is clear everything has gone wrong for White.

15...c4+ 16 ♔f1 ♖e8 17 ♘b4 ♘a6! 18 ♘xa6 ♗f5!

Now there is no good answer to the threat of 19...♗d3+.

19 ♘b4 ♖ad8 20 ♘d5

If 20 ♕a4 simply 20...a5 eliminates the knight, followed by...♗d3+.

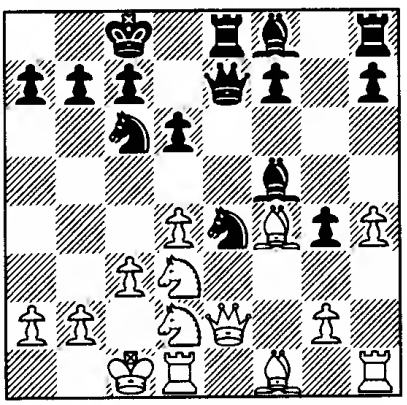
20...♖xd5! 21 ♗xd5 ♗d3+ 0-1

If 22 ♔g2 ♕xb2+ 23 ♔g1 ♗xc3 and there is no answer to 24...♗d4+ or 24...♕xa1.

Game 16
Henris-Goossens
Charleroi 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 d4 d6 7 ♘d3 ♘xe4 8 ♗xf4

In view of Black's convincing play in the game above, White should consider 8 ♕e2, which forces the reply 8...♕e7. However, White is also struggling in this variation. The critical position is reached after 9 ♗xf4 ♘c6 10 c3 ♗f5 11 ♘d2 0-0-0 12 0-0-0 ♖e8 (12...♗g7 deserves attention).



This position is very dangerous for White. Here are three ways to lose:

a) Hajek-Bures, Correspondence 1962, went 13 g3? ♘xc3! 14 ♕xe7 ♘xa2+ 15 ♔b1 ♖xe7 16 ♔xa2 ♗xd3 17 ♗xd3 ♘b4+ (the point) 18 ♔b3 ♘xd3 and White resigned.

b) The game Holmes-Hebden, Plymouth 1989, continued 13 ♖e1? ♕e6! and White was already in trouble as 14 ♔b1 loses to 14...♘xd2+ 15 ♗xd2 ♕xe2 16 ♗xe2 ♖xe2! And if 14 ♘xe4 then 14...♕xa2 anyway. Therefore, White had no good way to defend a2. He tried 14 a3 but, was quickly overwhelmed after 14...♕a2 15 ♕d1 h5 16 g3 ♗g7 17 ♖h2 ♘xc3! 18 bxc3 ♕xa3+ 19 ♔c2 ♗xd4 20 ♕a1 ♘b4+ and White resigned.

c) Another try is 13 d5, which Gallagher refutes as follows: 13...♘xc3! 14 ♕xe7 ♘xa2+ 15 ♔b1 ♘xe7 16 ♔xa2 ♘xd5. White loses a piece and remains three pawns behind.

Gallagher therefore suggests 13 ♘xe4 as best, when after 13...♕xe4 14 ♕xe4 ♗xe4 15 ♘f2 f5 White's position will be very hard to break down. Nevertheless, this isn't what White wants when he plays the King's Gambit. We can only conclude that the variation 6 d4 is under a cloud for White.

8...♕e7?!

Since the previous game proves that 8...♗g7 is playable, this move, which aims for ...0-0-0, seems inappropriate.

9 ♗e2!?

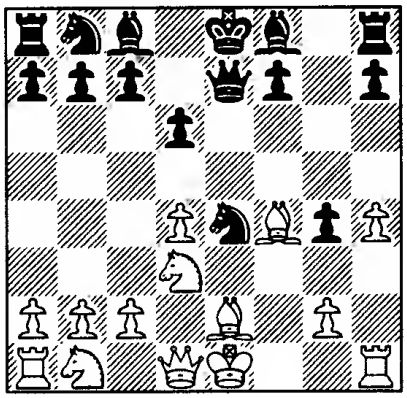
see following diagram

The best try for White, avoiding a transposition after 9 ♕e2 to the unpleasant variation examined at move eight above.

9...♗g7

Gallagher analyses 9...h5, 9...♘c6 and 9...♗f5 as deserving attention.

However, the game move is very natural.



10 ♘c3! ♗xd4?

This loses. It seems that Black has nothing better than 10...♘xc3 11 bxc3. Then 11...c5?! (11...♘c6! is safer) follows Fischer above (see Game 15, move 9). However, Black has wasted a tempo in playing 9...♕e7. Not surprisingly, this changes the theoretical verdict: 12 0-0 cxd4 13 ♗xg4 0-0 14 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 15 ♕g4 and White has a dangerous initiative.

11 ♘d5! ♕d8

Henris gives 11...♕d7 12 c3 ♗g7 13 h5! h6 14 ♘f2! ♘xf2 15 ♔xf2 as 'good for White', but this was certainly a better try for Black.

12 c3 ♗e6 13 ♕a4+!

This unexpected move is much stronger than 13 cxd4.

13...♘c6 14 cxd4 ♗xd5 15 ♘b4!

The point. If now 15...♗e6 16 ♘xc6! ♕d7 (16...bxc6 17 ♕xc6+ wins the knight on e4) 17 d5 ♘c5 18 ♕d4 wins material.

15...♘f6 16 ♗g5

The pin on f6 will prove fatal.

16...♗xg2 17 ♖h2 h6!? 18 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 19 ♖xg2 ♕xh4+ 20 ♔d2 ♕g5+ 21 ♔d1

Black has four pawns for the piece but his king has no safe place and he is badly behind in development. What follows is desperation.

21...h5!? 22 ♘xc6 ♔f8 23 ♘b4 g3 24 ♕d7 h4 25 ♖c1 h3 26 ♖xc7 ♕f4 27 ♕e7+ ♔g7 28 ♖xg3+! 1-0

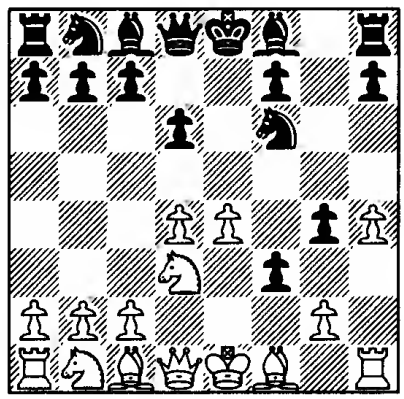
It is mate in two after 28...♕xg3 29 ♕xf7+ ♔h6 30 ♕h5.

Game 17

Spassky-Xie Jun

Monaco 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 ♘f6 6 d4 d6 7 ♘d3 f3



Xie Jun is well prepared in the openings and comes up with a new idea in this familiar setting. But I don't like it! Instead of capturing a pawn – a healthy centre pawn – Black gives up a pawn and makes any future ...♘xe4 liquidation problematical. White maintains a strong centre: indeed, it is made stronger by 7...f3. Certainly, the kingside becomes inhospitable for his king, but there is always the queenside, either through 0-0-0 or ♔d2 and ♔c2 (after preparation of course).

However, it seems that the verdict on the position depends on a piece sacrifice in the analysis below.

8 gxf3 ♘c6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♗g2 ♖g8 11 ♗g5! h6 12 ♗xf6

After 12 ♗xh6 ♘h5 and 13...♗xh4+ Black has good play.

12...♗xf6 13 h5

A very unaesthetic move in the King's Gambit. The pawn advances not with any attacking or positional aims, but merely to avoid capture. Nevertheless, White can be pleased with his compact centre. Black's next move attempts to undermine it.

13...d5

This aims to break up the white centre and so open more lines for the well activated black pieces. Other moves don't seem particularly promising, e.g. 13...gxf3 14 ♗xf3 ♗h4+ (14...♗g5 15 ♘d2 ♕f6 16 ♕e2) 15 ♔d2 ♕f6 16 ♔c2 ♖g3 17 ♘d2 ♗g5 18 ♗e2 with advantage to White.

14 ♕e2

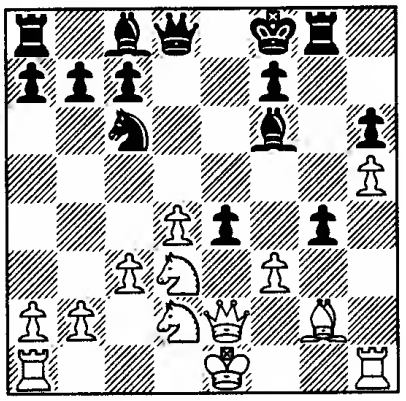
14 e5 is less good, e.g. 14...gxf3 15 ♗xf3 (Black has a strong initiative after 15 ♕xf3 ♗h4+ 16 ♔f1 ♗g4 17 ♕xd5 ♕g5) 15...♗h4+ 16 ♔d2 with unclear play or 14...♗h4+ 15 ♔d2 (15 ♔f1 ♗f5!? 16 f4 ♗g3) 15...♗f5. Black seems at least okay in these variations due to his more active pieces, especially the dark-squared bishop, which who has no white rival.

14...♔f8

The black king is safe here as long as the f-file remains inaccessible to White's rooks. Also, it doesn't harm the co-ordination of Black's pieces, since the king's rook has found an active role on the g-file.

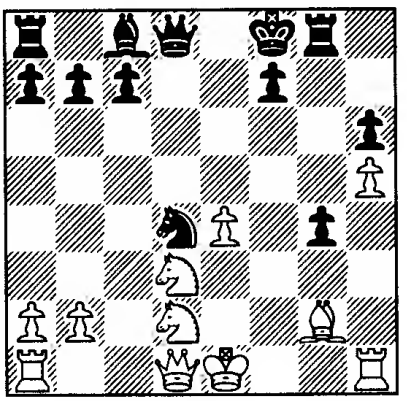
The immediate 14...gxf3 gives White the edge after 15 ♗xf3 dxe4 16 ♕xe4+ ♘e7 17 ♘d2 ♗f5 18 ♕e2.

15 ♘d2 dxe4



16 ♘xe4?

This is the critical moment in the game. The natural move is 16 fxe4!, keeping the centre. Spassky probably rejected it because he was afraid of the sacrifice 16...♗xd4!?, which certainly looks very dangerous. However, it seems that if White is vigilant he can hold his position together after the sacrifice and then exploit the extra piece. But let's look at the variations: 17 cxd4 ♘xd4 18 ♕d1.



Now Black has a choice:

a) 18...♕g5 19 ♘f1! ♗e6 20 ♕d2

♖d8 21 ♕xg5 ♖xg5 22 ♖c1 c6 23 ♘c5 and White should win.

b) 18...g3 19 ♘f3 (two variations demonstrate the strength of Black's attack against inaccurate play: 19 0-0 ♕h4 20 ♘f3 ♘xf3+ 21 ♖xf3 ♕h2+ 22 ♔f1 ♗h3 23 ♗xh3 g2+ 24 ♗xg2 ♖xg2 and White will be mated; or 19 ♕a4 ♗g4 20 ♘e5 b5! 21 ♕a3+ ♕d6! 22 ♖c1 [or else the fork on c2 is decisive] 22...b4 23 ♕a5 ♖g5 24 ♖c5 ♖xe5 25 ♖xe5 ♘c2+ 26 ♔f1 ♕d3+ 27 ♔g1 ♕e3+ 28 ♔f1 ♗e2 mate) 19...♗g4 20 ♘de5!, and it appears that White can defend successfully, when his extra piece will give him winning chances.

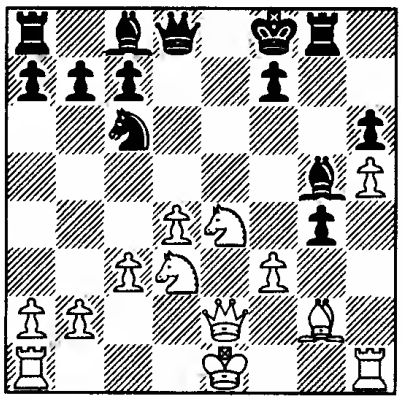
Assuming that the above analysis is correct, it seems that Black's opening experiment with 7...f3 is unsound. On the other hand, it is no surprise that Spassky had no wish to enter these sharp lines without pre-game analysis.

16...♗g5

see following diagram

The sacrifice on d4 now seems bad: 16...♗xd4 17 cxd4 ♘xd4 18 ♕f2 and White is on top. So Black provokes a weakening in White's centre by preventing 0-0-0.

17 f4 ♗h4+ 18 ♔d2 a5 19 ♘ec5 ♗f6 20 ♖ae1 ♖b8 21 ♔c1 ♘e7 22 ♘e5 ♘f5 23 ♘e4 ♗e7 24 ♖d1



White has succeeded in castling 'by hand'. He now stands better in the centre, but it is difficult to break through the obstacles on the kingside and get at the black king. Meanwhile, Black is preparing counterplay on the queenside.

24...c6 25 ♖hg1 ½-½

Here Spassky offered a draw. He might have tried 25 ♘xg4, since if Black tries to regain her pawn with 25...♘g3 26 ♘xg3 ♗xg4 27 ♗f3 ♗e6 28 ♖hg1 ♗xa2, she faces a withering attack after 29 ♘f5.

But Black can ignore the loss of a pawn and continue her attacking build-up against White's king with 25...♗e6 or 25...b5. It is a pity that the game was cut short. The Spassky of the 1960s would never have agreed a draw here!

Summary
The Kieseritzky is an enterprising variation that sets Black some difficult problems. However, theoretically speaking, Black seems to have at least equal chances in almost every variation.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5

5...d6

5...♘f6

6 ♗c4 d5 7 exd5 *(D)*

7...♗g7 – Game 12

7...♗d6 8 d4

8...0-0 – *Game 13*

8...♘h5 – *Game 14*

6 d4 d6 7 ♘d3 *(D)*

7...♘xe4 8 ♗xf4

8...♗g7 – *Game 15*

8...♕e7 – *Game 16*

7...f3 – Game 17

6 ♘xg4 ♘f6

6...♗e7 – *Game 11*

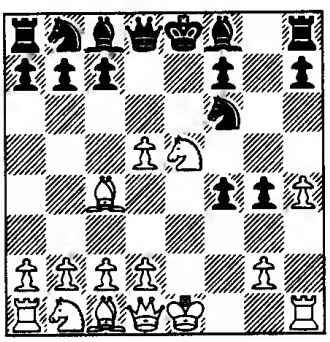
7 ♘f2

7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 ♘c3 (D)

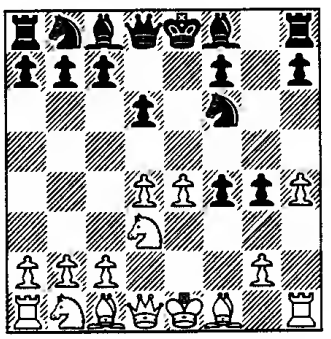
8...c6 – *Game 9*

8...♗e6 – *Game 10*

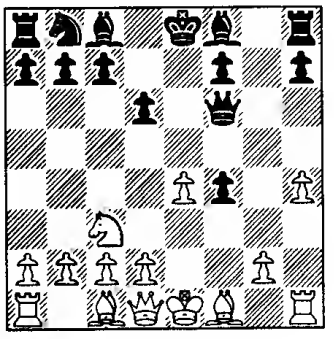
7...♘c6 – *Game 8*



7 exd5

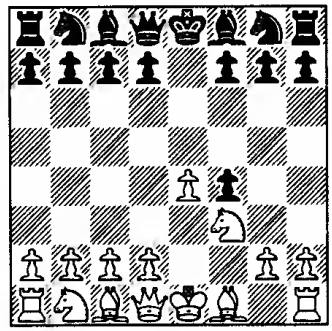


7 ♘d3



8 ♘c3

CHAPTER THREE



Other Gambits after 3 ♘f3 g5 and 3...♘c6

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3

According to Korchnoi and Zak 'in answer to 3...g5 White has only one means of obtaining a completely equal game, and that is the Kieseritzky Gambit.' The games in this chapter would appear to confirm this statement. Here you will find some famous, enterprising and attractive sacrificial lines dating back to the golden age of the King's Gambit, but none that pass the modern test of analytical soundness.

The Allgaier Gambit 4 h4 g4 5 ♘g5 (Game 18) looks highly suspect for White.

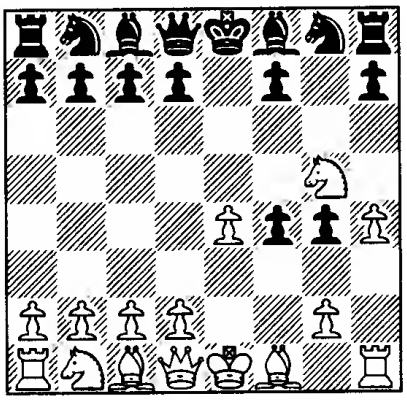
Games 19 and 20, the Philidor and Hanstein Gambits, show just how much White suffers when he fails to undermine the black pawn chain with 4 h4! g4 5 ♘e5! White already looks uncomfortable after 4 ♗c4 ♗g7. At least after 4...g4 he can cheer himself up by sacrificing a piece with the good old Muzio Gambit 5 0-0 (Games 21-23). Here I have to be cynical and point out that 9...♕f5! in the notes to Game 22 looks very strong for Black. However, Game 23 is played in romantic style, with a heart-warming victory for sacrifice over petty defence. In fact, White's attack after 13 ♗e5! looks devastating. But before you start planning to carry out this attack in your own games, remember that first you have to tread through a minefield of positions that are better for Black.

In Game 24 we see a selection of unsound gambits after 4...g4. It is difficult to know which is the worst, but this dubious distinction should probably go to the Lolli Gambit.

The Pierce Gambit is made to look like a forced loss in Game 26. However, when White tries the Pierce Gambit with a different move order in Game 25 he has a great success. Michael Adams seems bemused to be faced with the ancient attack and reacts too passively. This shows that on the right occasion a bold choice of opening can unnerve even the most steely opposition.

Game 18
Neffe-Bronstein
Wrexham 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘g5



The Allgaier Gambit in its pure form. A version via the Fischer Defence with ...d7-d6 and d2-d4 thrown in was considered in Game 5, while the so-called Hamppe-Allgaier – i.e. the Allgaier with ♘c3 and ...♘c6 already played – is analysed in the notes to move five in Game 26. None of these versions is theoretically watertight, but in practice they can all prove tricky.

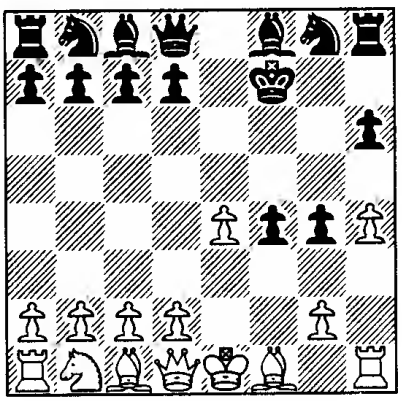
5...d5

Bronstein's choice, and he knows about these things! However, acceptance of the sacrifice with 5...h6 is critical. Then after 6 ♘xf7 ♔xf7

see following diagram

White has a choice of three follow-up moves:

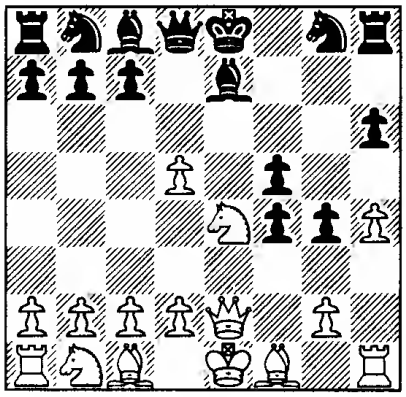
a) 7 ♗c4+ (this is the normal move but, judging from the following variation, it seems bad for White) 7...d5 (the standard idea to free his pieces; Black is a piece up and therefore doesn't begrudge returning one pawn) 8 ♗xd5+ ♔e8 (8...♔g7 is also possible) 9 d4 ♘f6 10 ♘c3 ♘h5! (an excellent move which defends f4; Black is not prepared to defend passively – he wants to attack!) 11 0-0 c6 12 ♗b3 ♗g7! (now the threat to the d4-pawn gains time to bring another defender to the f4-pawn) 13 e5 ♖f8 14 ♘e4 ♕xh4 15 ♘d6+ ♔d7 and Black has a winning attack, with threats of 16...g3 or 16...♘g3 or 16...f3. Of course, he is also still a piece up! This variation is analysis by Chabelsky, quoted from Bangiev.



b) 7 d4 f3 8 gxf3 (Black is clearly better after both 8 ♘c3 ♗b4 9 gxf3 d5 and 8 ♗e3 d5 9 ♘c3 ♗b4 10 ♕d2 ♘f6 – Estrin) 8...d5 9 ♗f4 ♘f6 10 e5 ♘h5 11 fxg4 ♘xf4 12 ♕f3 ♔g7 and White's play had been refuted in Gunsberg-Bird, London 1889.

c) 7 ♘c3!? (perhaps the best try) 7...d5 8 d4 f3 9 ♘xd5 ♘f6 10 ♘xf6 is Bosboom-Teichmann, Ramsgate 1984, and now 10...♕xf6 looks at least equal for Black, as 11 e5 ♕f5 12 ♗d3 fails to 12...fxg2 13 ♖g1 ♕f3!

6 exd5 h6 7 ♕e2+ ♗e7 8 ♘e4 f5



9 ♘bc3!?

A spirited approach, but can it really be sound? White gives up a piece to disturb the black king, but Black has a lead in development and the white rooks are far away. There is no good reason why Black should suddenly find himself mated.

The pusillanimous move 9 ♘f2 was played in another Bronstein game. In Duz-Khotimirsky-Bronstein, Moscow 1954, White was soon defeated after 9...♘f6 10 d4 0-0 11 ♗xf4 ♘xd5 12 ♕d2 ♘xf4 13 ♕xf4 ♔g7 14 ♗e2 ♖e8 15 0-0 ♗d6 16 ♕d2 ♕xh4.

A lot of history (chess and otherwise) is evoked by these two games. Duz-Khotimirsky, whose best years were before the Russian Revolution, beat both Lasker and Rubinstein at St Petersburg in 1909; and he was 75 years old when he played the 30-year-old Bronstein. Bronstein was 70 himself when he faced the youthful Neffe in Wrexham. How times change!

9...fxe4 10 ♕xe4 ♘f6 11 ♕g6+ ♔f8 12 d4 ♕e8!

Just in time before White plays 13 ♗xf4, attacking h6. The exchange of queens is now forced. However, this exchange doesn't necessarily mean the end to White's attack in the King's Gambit.

13 ♕xe8+ ♘xe8

The alternative was 13...♔xe8, when if 14 ♘b5? ♘xd5 15 c4 c6 wins for Black. However, White can do better with 14 ♗xf4 ♗d6?! 15 ♗b5+! ♔d8 (if 15...♗d7 16 0-0) 16 0-0 with good play. Therefore, Black should answer 14 ♗xf4 with 14...♔d8. Black has an extra piece, but White has annoying pressure and can slowly build up his game with 0-0-0, ♗d3 etc.

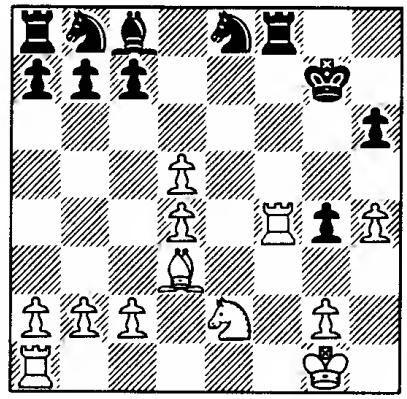
14 ♗xf4 ♗d6

Perhaps Bronstein believed that this refuted the attack, as 15 ♗xd6+ ♘xd6 is hopeless for White. But Neffe finds an elegant reply.

15 ♗d3! ♗xf4 16 0-0

Now White regains one piece and maintains his initiative.

16...♔g7 17 ♖xf4 ♖f8 18 ♘e2!



Another unexpected move. The knight joins in the action. Soon every white piece is attacking the black king and there are few defenders in sight!

18...c6!

After fifty years of international

chess, Bronstein has a calm head in a crisis. He understands that instead of trying to rush his queenside pieces over to the king, he must weather the coming storm by breaking White's hold on the centre.

19 ♖af1 ♖xf4 20 ♘xf4 cxd5 21 ♘h5+ ♔g8 22 ♗g6 ♘d6 23 ♖f6 ♘e4 24 ♖f7

According to analysis by Nigel Davies, this is a mistake. He claims that White should play 24 ♖f4, planning 25 ♗f7+ and 26 ♗xd5, when White has three pawns and an attack for the piece. So Black's best reply would be 24...♘d6, when 25 ♖f6 ♘e4 draws by repetition.

24...♘c6 25 ♖c7 ♘xd4 26 ♖g7+ ♔f8 27 ♖f7+ ♔g8 28 ♖g7+ ♔f8 29 ♖f7+ ♔g8

Bronstein is happy to take the draw. Instead he would have had winning chances by running to the queenside with 29...♔e8! White has no good way to exploit the discovered check. Nevertheless, Davies believes that White would have reasonable practical chances after 30 ♘f4 ♘d6 31 ♖h7+ ♔f8 32 h5 etc.

30 ♖g7+ ½-½

A highly interesting game.

Game 19
Yoos-Hjartarson
Reykjavik 1996

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 ♗g7!

Personally I think that Black does well to avoid the complexities of the Muzio (Games 21-23) after 4...g4 5 0-0 etc. He is better in the Philidor or Hanstein Gambits, so why enter dangerous sacrificial variations?

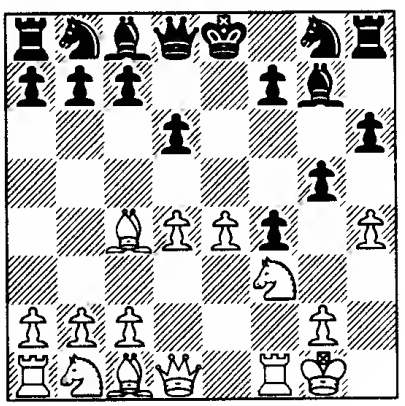
5 h4

This move distinguishes the Philidor from the Hanstein 5 0-0 (see the next game).

5...h6 6 d4 d6

I have changed the move order here for the sake of clarity. In fact the game began as a Fischer Variation: 3...d6 and after 4 ♗c4(?) h6 5 d4 g5 6 h4 ♗g7 transposed to the Philidor. White could (and objectively should) avoid this line. This is easily done: after the Fischer 3...d6 play 4 d4 g5 5 h4!, not giving Black time to solidify his kingside with ...h7-h6 and ...♗g7. And after 3...g5, play 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5 with a Kieseritzky. The point is to oblige Black to play ...g5-g4 immediately. If you fail to force Black to weaken himself with ...g5-g4 then there is no hope for an advantage. In fact, as we shall see, it is Black who normally gets a stronger attack.

7 0-0!?



This is better than the old line 7 c3 ♘c6 8 ♕b3? (8 0-0 would transpose to the main game), when Black has an undoubted advantage after 8...♕e7!

Zak and Korchnoi analyse 9 0-0 ♘f6 10 hxg5 hxg5 11 ♘xg5 (the only consistent move) and now 11...♘xd4! is very strong, e.g. 12 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 13 cxd4 ♘xe4 and both 14 ♘f3 ♗xd4+ 15 ♘xd4 ♕h4 and 14 ♗xf4 ♗xd4+ 15 ♗e3 ♗xe3+ 16 ♕xe3 ♘xg5 are hopeless for White. If this were not enough, Black also has a decisive attack after the more mundane 11...♘xe4, e.g. 12 ♘xf7 ♖h7! 13 ♖xf4 ♘xd4! 14 ♕d1 ♘g3.

Apart from 7 0-0!? and 7 c3 two other moves are possible:

a) 7 ♕d3. This is dismissed by theory because of the simple developing 7...♘c6! Now after 8 hxg5 hxg5 9 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 10 e5 (threatening 11 ♕h7; the whole idea of 7 ♕d3) 10...♗g7! leaves White with no good way to continue his attack since he is behind in development, e.g. 11 ♘c3 ♘h6 12 exd6 cxd6 13 ♘d5 ♔f8 14 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 15 ♗xf4 ♕h4+ and White has little compensation for the piece, Rosenthal-Neumann, 1869. Equally good is 10...♔f8!, when after 11 ♕h7 ♗g7 12 ♕h5 ♘h6 13 exd6 the piece sacrifice 13...♘xd4! 14 ♘xd4 ♗g4! 15 ♕h2 ♕xd6 proved decisive in the game Remakulus-Brglez, Correspondence 1983, as White's king is trapped in the centre. White resigned after 16 ♘e2 ♖e8 17 ♘d2 ♘f5! It is easy to work out that there is no defence to 18...♘g3 or 18...♘d4.

This all looks very convincing, but 7 ♕d3 was repeated in the game Pavlovic-Tukmakov, Lugano 1986. That game continued 7...g4 8 ♘g1 ♘c6 9 ♘e2 ♘ge7 10 ♘bc3 (this looks better than 10 ♗xf4 d5) 10...♘b4 (stirring up complications, as otherwise White simply takes on f4 with a good game) 11 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 12 ♕c4+ ♗e6 13 ♕xb4 f3 14 gxf3 gxf3 15 ♖f1 ♘c6 16 ♖xf3+ ♔g8 17 ♕xb7 ♘xd4 18 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 19 ♖g3+ ♔h7 20 e5!? and now 20...d5 looks best with obscure play. Was Pavlovic bluffing, or did he have a new idea against 7...♘c6? Had Tukmakov forgotten the theoretical recommendation?

b) 7 ♘c3 has the obvious drawback that the d4-pawn can no longer be supported with c2-c3. This is an especially risky way for White to play. We have to delve in the archives to find an example: 7...♘c6 8 ♘e2 ♕e7 9 ♕d3 ♗d7 10 ♗d2 0-0-0 11 ♗c3 (Zak points out that Keres' suggestion 11 0-0-0 fails to 11...♘f6!, when 12 hxg5 is met by 12...♘xe4) ♖e8 12 d5 (not a pretty move to have to make) 12...♘e5 13 ♘xe5 dxe5 14 0-0-0 ♘f6 and White had negligible compensation for the pawn in Anderssen-Neumann, 1866.

7...♘c6 8 c3 ♘f6

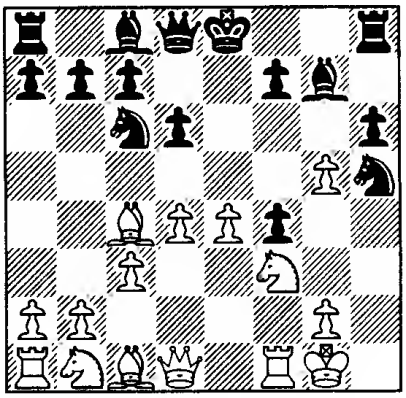
If 8...♗g4!? 9 ♕d3!? with unclear play – Yoos.

An important question is whether after 8...♕e7 White is obliged to transpose into the note at move seven above with 9 ♕b3. Perhaps 9 ♕d3 is better, keeping the queen involved in the defence of the centre.

A final possibility is 8...g4!? According to Estrin White gets the advantage after 9 ♘e1! f3 10 gxf3 ♕xh4 11 f4 g3 12 ♘f3. This verdict was challenged in the game Hughes-J.Littlewood, England 1992, which continued 12...♕h5 13 f5 ♘f6 14 ♕e2 g2!? 15 ♔xg2 ♖g8 16 ♔f2 ♗d7, and after 17...0-0-0 Black

had good play. Even better for Black is 14...d5!, as after 15 exd5+ ♘e7 16 ♖e1 0-0! White is in deep trouble – J.Littlewood.

9 hxg5 ♘h5!?

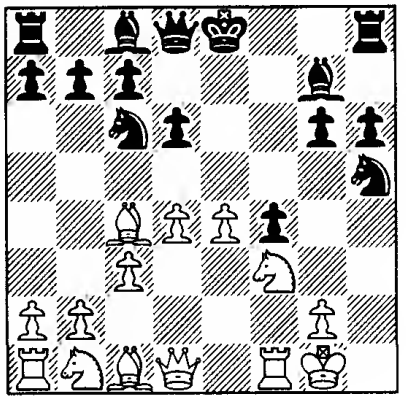


Yoos had planned to answer 9...♘xe4 with 10 ♗d5!?, when 10..♘xg5 11 ♗xf4 is unclear, rather than follow the *ECO* recommendation of 10 ♖e1 d5 11 ♗d3 hxg5 12 ♗xe4 dxe4 13 ♖xe4+ ♔f8, which looks bad for White. Unfortunately for him Black got his novelty in first!

10 g6!?

An interesting sacrifice. White gives up the pawn in such a way that the h-file remains blocked and his king is therefore safe from attack by the rook on h8. After Black's reply the scope of the bishop on c4 is increased and Black can no longer spirit his king away to safety on the kingside. However, 10 g6 also straightens out Black's wrecked kingside pawn structure, so it is not a natural move. Nevertheless, it is difficult to suggest an alternative as after 10 gxh6 ♖xh6 11 ♕b3 ♕d7 12 ♘g5? ♘xd4! 13 cxd4 ♗xd4+ 14 ♖f2 ♘g3 Black's attack wins (variation by Hjartarson).

10...fxg6



11 ♘h2?!

Hjartarson gives 11 ♘bd2 as unclear. However, Black has a sound extra pawn, a wedge on f4 and arguably the safer king. And what is White's plan? An attempted breakthrough with e4-e5 would lead, after the exchange ...d6xe5; d4xe5, to the weakening of the a7-g1 diagonal, which would put White's king in peril. White's compensation rests in the possibility of gaining space on the queenside with b2-b4 etc., and the fact that he can respond to the development of the bishop on c8 with ♕b3, hitting both b7 and threatening ♗f7+. However, the plan of b2-b4 can be met in similar fashion to the game, while Black can prepare the development of his bishop with 11...♕e7. In all, Black's chances must be preferred.

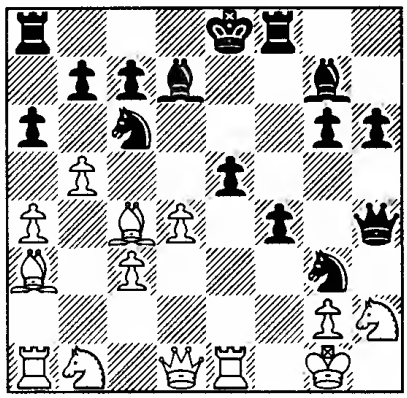
11...♖f8 12 b4

Switching play to the queenside. In his earlier calculations, White had probably thought that he could play 12 ♗e2 here, missing the combination 11...♘g3 13 ♖xf4 ♘xd4! 14 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 15 cxd4 ♗xd4+ and wins by forking on e2.

12...a6 13 a4 ♗d7 14 ♗a3 ♘g3 15 ♖e1 ♕h4

Now Black's attack on the kingside begins to look dangerous, so White gambles on a quick breakthrough in the centre.

16 e5! dxe5 17 b5



17...♘e7?

Black misses 17...f3!, e.g. 18 ♘xf3 ♕h1+ 19 ♔f2 ♘e4+! 20 ♔e3 ♕xg2 21 ♗xf8 (21 ♔xe4 ♕f2!) 21...♕f2+ 22 ♔d3 ♘g3! and in view of the threat of 23...♗f5+ White is in deep trouble – Hjartarson. However, it was by no means easy to see this variation during the game, and even at the end White can still complicate with 23 ♗e6!? (clearing c4 as an escape route for the king) 23...♗xe6 24 ♗xg7. Hjartarson's blunder reminds us that the King's Gambit experience is an unpleasant one even for strong grandmasters. Even if a line is theoretically bad it can still work wonders in practice against a surprised, bewildered or complacent opponent.

18 ♘d2

Suddenly White has an excellent position: the enemy king is trapped in the centre and he only has to break open the e-file to force the win. However, this proves none too easy.

18...♕h5!

Hjartarson is an excellent defender. Of course, the exchange of queens is anathema to White so Black gains time to bolster e5.

19 ♕b3 ♖f5! 20 ♘df3?

White is nonplussed by his opponent's defence. Flexible thinking was required. Since the e5-square is heavily fortified, White should have looked to an easier target. There are few black defenders on the queenside, so 20 bxa6 bxa6 21 ♕b7 was correct, when after 21...♖c8 22 ♗xa6 the passed pawn becomes the most important feature of the position.

20...e4! 21 ♗e6?

It still wasn't too late for 21 bxa6 bxa6 22 ♕b7.

21...axb5! 22 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 23 ♗xf5 ♕xf5

Now the mobile black centre pawns, two bishops and the ridiculous white knight on h2 give Black a strong initiative.

24 ♘d2 e3 25 ♘df1 ♘e4 26 ♘f3 g5 27 ♘xe3 fxe3 28 ♖xe3 ♗e6 29 ♕b4+ ♔d8 30 ♖ae1 ♖xa4 31 ♕b2?

The last chance was 31 ♕b1, but 31...♗d5 32 ♖xe4 ♗xe4 33 ♖xe4 ♖a1 34 ♕xa1 ♕xe4 35 ♕a8+ ♔e7 36 ♕g8 ♗f6 wins for Black (Hjartarson).

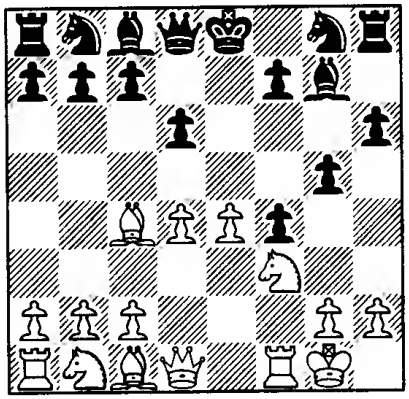
31...♖a2 32 ♕b1 ♖xg2+ 0-1

Game 20
Jonkman-L.B.Hansen
Wijk aan Zee 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 ♗g7 5 0-0

White avoids 5 h4. His king will now be safer on the kingside, but on the other hand so will the black king.

5...d6 6 d4 h6



7 c3

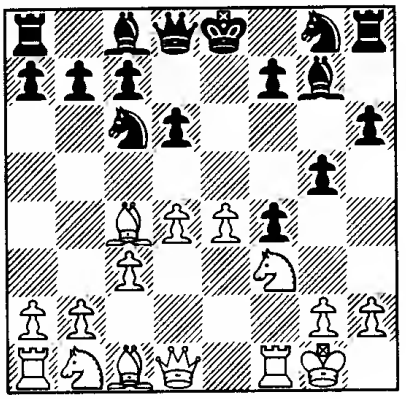
White strengthens the d4-square. The alternatives are equally unpromising:

a) 7 ♘c3 ♗e6!? 8 ♗xe6 fxe6 9 e5 ♘c6! and Black gains a clear advantage by undermining the white centre (variation by Rabinovich).

b) 7 g3 (this attempt to break up the black kingside fails as White's centre is unstable; in fact, it is the white kingside which is more fragile) 7...♗h3 8 ♖f2 ♘c6! (counterattacking against d4; if now 9 gxf4 g4 etc.) 9 ♗b5 ♘f6! (developing with an eye on e4) 10 d5 a6 (Estrin) and Black has a big advantage after 11 ♗a4 b5 or 11 dxc6 axb5 as the white centre has lost all its cohesion.

7...♘c6!

The careless 7...♘f6? would allow 8 e5! dxe5 9 ♘xe5 0-0 10 ♕b3, when White threatens both 11 ♘xf7 and 11 ♘g6 and 7...♘e7 is also inaccurate, as 8 g3 g4 9 ♘h4 f3 10 ♘a3 0-0 11 ♗f4 gives White an initiative for his pawn.



8 b4

If Black is allowed to develop his pieces undisturbed he soon has the better game, e.g. 8 ♘a3 ♘f6! 9 ♕d3 0-0 10 ♗d2 d5! 11 exd5 ♘xd5 12 ♗b3 ♘de7 13 ♖ae1 ♗f5 (Chigorin). Therefore White has to do something active. But what?

First, he could consider attacking the f4-pawn with 8 g3. However, this rebounds after 8...♗h3!, e.g. 9 gxf4 ♕d7! (this is much better than seizing the exchange with 9...♗xf1, when all the dynamism disappears from Black's position - rapid development and an attack on White's centre and kingside is called for!) 10 ♖f2 ♘f6 11 ♕e1 0-0-0 12 ♗b5 ♖he8 (completing the mobilisation of all the black pieces; now e4 is coming under fatal pressure) 13 ♘bd2 gxf4 14 ♔h1 ♘xe4! 15 ♘xe4 d5 and Black conquers the centre and thus gains a clear advantage (analysis by Glaskov).

Second, White could try and attack the g5-pawn with 8 h4. This transposes to the Philidor game above, in which 8...♘f6! proved good for Black.

A third option is 8 ♕b3, attacking f7. This is well answered by 8...♕d7!,

planning 9...♘a5 to deprive White of his good bishop.

Since the game move also proves insufficient, it seems that Black has a least a small advantage in the diagram position. White's misfortunes can be traced all the way back to the fourth move, when he failed to undermine the black kingside with 4 h4!

8...♕e7?!

The immediate 8...♗g4, planning 9...♕d7, may save a tempo on the game continuation.

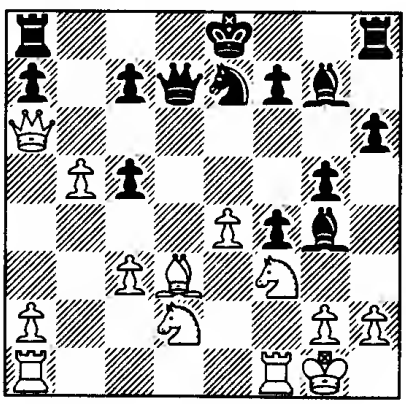
9 b5 ♘a5 10 ♗d3 ♗g4 11 ♗a3 ♕d7

See the note to Black's eighth move. The queen moves out of the way of a threatened pin after 12 e5.

12 ♘bd2 ♘e7 13 ♕a4 b6 14 ♗b4 ♘b7 15 ♕a6 ♘c5?!

A very logical move. Black makes a pseudo-sacrifice of his worst placed piece to wreck the white centre and unleash the bishop on g7. However, there is a tactical drawback to this move due to the fact that Black's king is still in the centre.

16 dxc5 dxc5 17 ♗xc5 bxc5



18 ♗c4?

White should have tried 18 b6!, e.g. 18...cxb6 19 ♗b5 ♘c6 20 ♘c4, threatening 21 ♘fe5 or 21 ♘xb6. After 20...♗xf3 21 ♘xb6 looks good for White, e.g. 21...♗d4+ 22 cxd4 ♕xd4+ 23 ♔h1 ♗xg2+ 24 ♔xg2 ♕xe4+ 25 ♖f3 g4 26 ♖e1! ♕xe1 27 ♗xc6+ ♔f8 28 ♖xf4 and White should win. Or if 20...♕c7 21 ♘xb6! is strong.

Probably Black should answer the pawn thrust with 18...0-0, but then after 19 b7 the passed pawn gives White compensation for his material and positional deficits.

In any case, this line was White's only chance, as the game continuation is hopeless.

Note that if Black hadn't squandered a tempo with 8...♕e7 and 11...♕d7 he would have already had time to castle kingside before 15 ♕a6. Then 15...♘c5! really would have been crushing. Therefore, the possibility of 18 b6 doesn't change the verdict that the Hanstein is a poor choice for White.

18...0-0

No doubt Black was relieved to play this move!

19 ♕a3 c6! 20 ♕xc5 ♖ac8!

White has temporarily regained his pawn, but there is no good way to defend c3.

21 b6 axb6 22 ♕xb6 ♗xc3

The dust has cleared and Black is a pawn up with a strong pair of bishops. Hansen's technique now makes short work of his opponent.

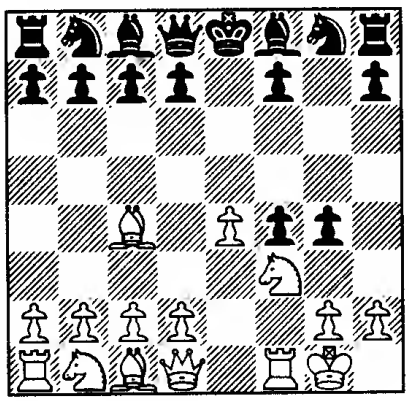
23 ♖ad1 ♖cd8 24 ♕b3 ♗g7 25 e5 ♘d5 26 h3 ♕a7+ 27 ♔h1 ♗f5 28 ♗xd5 cxd5 29 ♕b2 ♖a8 30 ♖a1 f6 31 ♕b3 fxe5 32 ♕xd5+ ♕f7 33 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 34 ♘b3 ♗d3 35 ♖fe1 e4 36 ♖ad1 0-1

White resigned as he loses after 36...♗c2 37 ♖d2 ♗xb3 38 axb3 exf3.

Game 21
Chigorin-Davidov
St Petersburg 1874

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 g4 5 0-0

The Muzio Gambit, where White frequently jettisons a huge amount of material, even by King's Gambit standards.



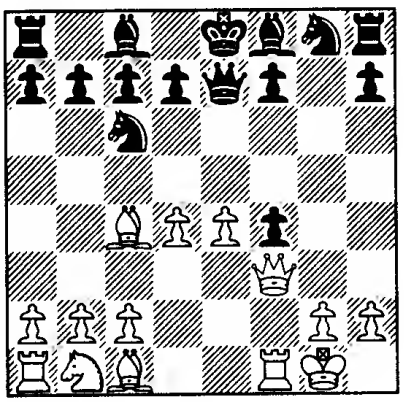
5...gxf3

Here Black has also tried 5...d5, which looks logical as this freeing move is often the antidote to white sacrifices in the King's Gambit. However, after 6 ♗xd5 the black defensive idea ...♕f6 is no longer effective, as there is no threat to win an undefended bishop on c4 with ...♕d4+. Therefore, Black has to develop normally, which means that White isn't compelled to stake everything on a second sacrifice on f7. With two pawns for the piece, White can play in positional style. After 6...gxf3 (6...c6? 7 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 8 ♘e5+ gives White a very superior version of the Lolli Gambit) 7 ♕xf3 ♘f6 8 ♕xf4 ♗e7 9 ♘c3 0-0 10 d3 c6 11 ♗b3 ♗e6 12 ♗d2 ♗xb3 13 axb3 ♘bd7 14 ♖f3 White built up a strong attack in Auerbach-Spielmann, Abbazia 1912.

6 ♕xf3 ♕f6

6...♗h6 is dubious as Black does nothing to oppose White's strong centre, e.g. 7 d4 ♕f6 8 e5 ♕f5 9 ♘c3 and White has good chances.

Another suspect try is 6...♕e7 7 d4 ♘c6.

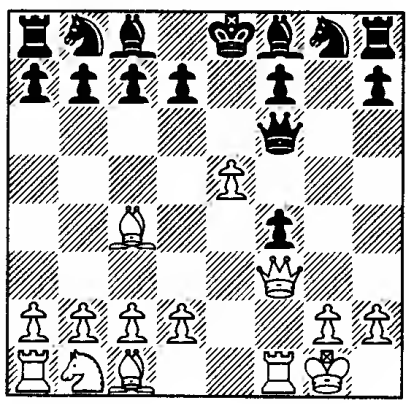


Now the most accurate move is 8 ♘c3, when in view of the threat of 9 ♘d5 Black is virtually forced into 8...♘xd4, after which 9 ♕d3 ♘e6 10 ♘d5 ♕c5+ 11 ♔h1 b5 12 ♗b3 ♗h6 13 ♗d2 etc. gave White a dangerous initiative in Steinitz-Anderssen, London 1862. In a more recent game, White preferred 8 ♗xf4, but this was refuted by some cold-blooded defence: 8...♘xd4 9 ♕d3 ♘e6 10 ♘c3 ♗g7 11 ♘d5 ♘xf4!! 12 ♖xf4 (or 12 ♘xe7 ♘xd3 and Black wins) 12...♕e5! 13 c3 (also hopeless for White are 13 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 14 ♘xc7+ ♔e7 15 ♘xa8 ♕d4+ and 13 ♕g3 ♕d4+ 14 ♔h1 ♗e5 15 ♘xc7+ ♗xc7 16 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 17 ♗xg8 ♗xf4 18 ♕h4+ ♔c7 19 ♕xf4+ d6)

13...♘h6 14 ♖af1 0-0 15 ♔h1 d6 16 ♘f6+ ♔h8. Here White had no compensation for the piece in Friedman-Shipman, Chicago 1989.

7 e5

The slow 7 d3?! is not to be recommended as Black is given time to organise his defences. Morais-Boino, Portugal 1993, continued 7...♗h6 8 ♘c3 ♘e7 9 e5 ♕xe5 10 ♗xf7+!? ♔d8! (the acceptance of the offer with 10...♔xf7 gives White some attacking chances, e.g. 11 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 12 ♘e2! ♘bc6 [or 12...♘g6 13 ♘xf4 ♘xf4 14 ♕g3] 13 ♘xf4, planning ♖ae1 etc., after Black has side-stepped the discovered check on the f-file. As we shall see in the main game, the best place for Black's king in this variation is d8. White has therefore lost time by driving it there) 11 ♗d2 ♘bc6 12 ♖ae1 ♕f6 (once again Black is helped by the bishop on f7, which is now attacked and so must move again, thereby losing more valuable time) 13 ♗b3 d6 and White had little or no compensation for the piece.



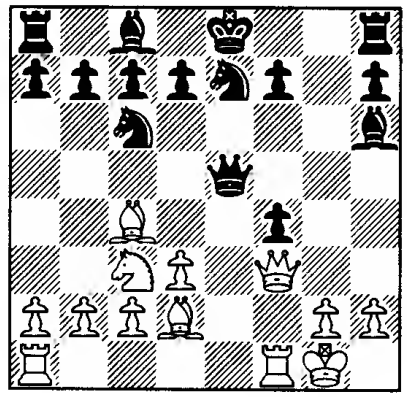
7...♕xe5 8 d3

This doesn't seem sufficient even for equality. 8 ♗xf7+ is considered in Games 22 and 23.

8...♗h6 9 ♘c3

9 ♗d2 ♘e7 10 ♘c3 transposes to the game (10 ♗c3? ♕c5+).

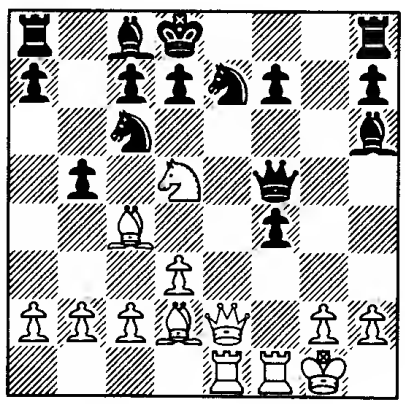
9...♘e7 10 ♗d2 ♘bc6!



The black king will be safer on d8 than on the kingside. Hence 10...0-0? would be a grave mistake, giving White a strong attack after 11 ♖ae1 ♕c5+ 12 ♔h1 followed by ♘e4, ♗c3 etc.

11 ♖ae1 ♕f5 12 ♘d5 ♔d8 13 ♗c3

It seems that White has no promising continuation. A key position is reached after the alternative 13 ♕e2 b5!



Now White has two ways to pursue his attack:

a) 14 ♘xe7 ♕c5+ (but not 14...bxc4?? 15 ♘xc6+ when Black will be mated on e7) 15 ♔h1 ♕xe7. Black retains his booty and should win by beating off the white attack, e.g. 16 ♕h5 ♕g5 17 ♕xf7 (if 17 ♗c3 then 17...♖f8!! 18 h4 ♕g6! refutes White's play) 17...bxc4 18 ♗xf4 (if 18 ♗c3 ♖f8 19 ♗f6+ ♕xf6 20 ♖e8+ ♖xe8 21 ♕xf6+ ♘e7 22 ♕xh6 cxd3 23 cxd3 ♖b8 and Black's material advantage should be decisive - Zak) 18...♕g6 19 ♗xh6 ♕xf7 20 ♖xf7 ♗a6 and Black wins.

b) 14 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 (if 14...♘xd5? 15 ♗xh6! and White has a winning attack) 15 ♖xf4 ♕g5 (if 15...♕e6 then 16 ♕f2 maintains the attack, while 15...♕xf4 16 ♘xf4 bxc4 17 dxc4 is unclear) 16 ♘xe7 ♘xe7 17 ♖xf7 bxc4 18 ♖xe7 ♕g6 and Black wins as the white attack cannot be strengthened.

13...♖e8

Both 13...♖g8 and 13...♖f8 also look good for Black.

14 ♗f6

Instead 14 ♕e2 was played in Keene-Pfleger, Montilla 1974, and a draw by repetition was agreed after 14...♕e6? 15 ♕f3 ♕f5 16 ♕e2. Instead Keene gives 14...d6! 15 ♘f6 (15 ♗f6 ♗e6) 15...♖f8 16 g4 ♕g6 17 h4 as good for White, but Black wins after 17...♗xg4 18 ♕xg4 (18 ♘xg4 ♖g8 19 ♔h1 ♕xg4) 18...♕xg4+ 19 ♘xg4 ♖g8 20 ♗f6 ♖xg4+ 21 ♔f2 ♖g6 etc.

White's other try is 14 ♘f6, but according to Zukertort Black wins after 14...♖f8 15 g4 ♕g6 16 h4 d5 17 ♗xd5 ♗xg4 18 ♕xg4 ♕xg4+ 19 ♘xg4 ♖g8 20 ♗f3 f5 21 ♗f6 ♔d7!

14...♗g5!

This adds another defender to e7 through the bishop on f6.

15 g4 ♕g6 16 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 17 h4 ♕xh4 18 ♕xf4 d6 19 ♘f6 ♘e5?

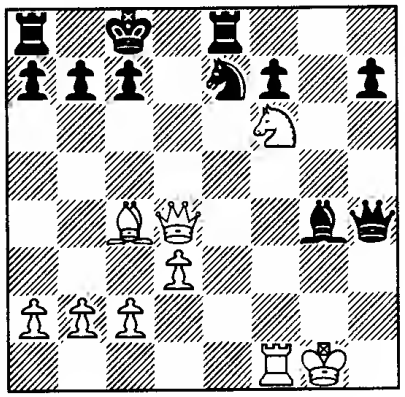
Black could have won with 19...♖f8! 20 ♖e2 ♗f5! 21 gxf5 ♕xf6 - Rabinovich. However, this game was played in an age when the King's Gambit usually led to spectacular victories for White.

20 ♖xe5! dxe5 21 ♕xe5 ♗xg4?

Black could have held the draw with 21...♗e6! 22 ♕d4+ ♘d5 23 ♗xd5 ♕g3+ 24 ♗g2+ ♕d6 25 ♕xd6+ cxd6 26 ♘xe8 ♔xe8 according to Golombek and Cafferty, e.g. 27 ♗xb7 ♖b8 28 ♗c6+ ♔f8 29 b3 ♖c8 picking up the c2-pawn.

In the game White now wins in style.

22 ♕d4+ ♔c8



23 ♗e6+!!

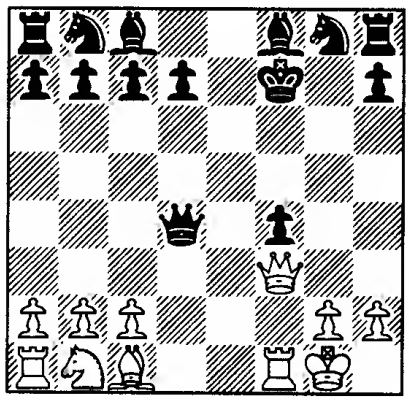
A beautiful move which exploits the pin on the black bishop to win control of the crucial d7-square. Such a move is difficult to see rather than to calculate, as it is not often a good idea to put a bishop en prise on a square which is heavily defended. Of course, the Fritz program took less than a

second to find this move: a computer has no human prejudices!

23...♔b8 24 ♘d7+ ♔c8 25 ♘c5+ ♔b8 26 ♘a6+! bxa6 27 ♕b4 mate 1-0

Game 22
Leisebein-Baer
Correspondence 1996

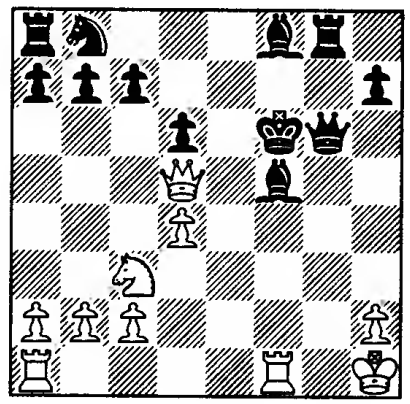
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 g4 5 0-0 gxf3 6 ♕xf3 ♕f6 7 e5 ♕xe5 8 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 9 d4 ♕xd4+



Here 9...♕f5! is a major alternative and may be the only playable move! A critical position is reached after 10 g4 ♕g6 (not 10...♕f6 when after 11 ♗xf4 d6 12 ♘c3 there is no good answer to 13 ♘d5 or 13 ♘e4) 11 ♗xf4 ♘f6 12 ♗e5 and now:

a) 12...♗e7?! was analysed by Sapi and Schneider in the *BCM*, September 1988. Their analysis went 13 ♘c3 d6 (instead 13...♔g8? leads to an overwhelming white attack: 14 ♖ae1 d6 15 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 16 ♘d5 ♘d7 17 ♘xc7 ♖b8 18 ♕d5+ ♔g7 [18...♕f7 allows the pretty finish 19 ♖e8+ ♘f8 20 ♖xf6! ♕xd5 21 ♖exf8+ ♔g7 22 ♘e8 mate] 19 ♘e6+ ♔h6 20 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 21 g5+ ♔h5 22 ♕f3+ and White wins) 14 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 15 ♘d5 ♕xg4+ 16 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 17 ♘xf6 (or 17 ♖xf6+ ♔g7 18 ♖f4 [18 ♖af1 ♖g8! 19 ♘xc7 ♘d7 is very good for Black] 18...♗h5 with a small advantage to Black - Korchnoi) 17...♗h3 (Korchnoi gives 17...♘c6 as equal) 18 ♖f3 ♘c6 19 ♘d5+ ♗f5! 20 ♖xf5+ ♔e6 21 ♖h5 ♖ag8+ 22 ♔h1 ♖g7 23 ♘xc7+ ♖xc7 24 d5+ with equality according to Sapi and Schneider. Perhaps White can even claim a small advantage in the endgame?

b) 12...d6! (this looks best; Black immediately returns the knight on f6 to gain counterplay along the g-file) 13 ♗xf6 ♗xg4 14 ♕g2 ♖g8 (threatening 15...♗f3!, but not 14...♗g7? 15 ♗g5+ ♔g8 16 ♕xg4) 15 ♔h1 ♗f5 16 ♕d5+ (Estrin stops his analysis here and claims that White is slightly better) 16...♔xf6 17 ♘c3.



At first glance this position appears to be uncomfortable for Black, as after 17...♘c6 (most other moves, e.g. 17...c6 or 17...♘d7 or 17...♗h6 meet with the same response) 18 ♖xf5+! ♕xf5? 19 ♘e4+! ♔g6 20 ♖g1+ wins the black queen. However, Black can jettison the bishop on f5 and emerge

with good chances after 18...♔e7! Then White has some attacking chances for the piece after 19 ♖e1+, but I doubt very much if it is enough to save the game.

10 ♗e3 ♕f6 11 ♘c3

This transposes to 11 ♗xf4 ♘e7 12 ♘c3 lines after Black's reply, but it gives Black two extra ways to go wrong.

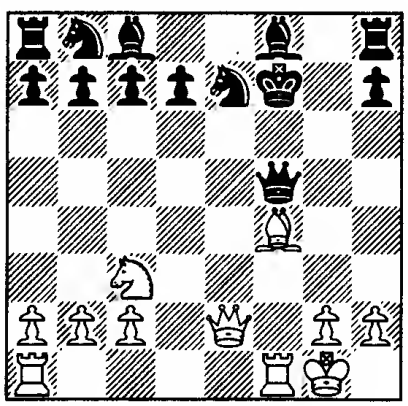
11...♘e7!

It was bad to accept the third piece, as 11...fxe3? 12 ♕h5+ ♔g7 13 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 14 ♕g5+ ♔f7 15 ♖f1 ♗e7 16 ♘d5 would be a massacre. Also bad was 11...d6? 12 ♘d5 ♕f5 13 g4! ♕xg4+ 14 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 15 ♖xf4+ and next move White either captures on c7 or g4 with check.

12 ♗xf4 ♔g8?

This loses. The standard 12...♘f5 and the inferior 12...♗g7? are examined in Game 23. However, judging from the outcome of that game it may be that after 9...♕xd4+ Black already has a lost position!

12...♕f5? is also bad after 13 ♕e2! and now:



a) 13...♔e8 14 ♗e5 ♕e6 15 ♖f6 ♕g8 16 ♕h5+ ♔d8 (or 16...♘g6 17 ♖e1 ♗e7 18 ♗xc7 ♘c6 19 ♘d5 d6 20 ♗xd6 ♔d8 21 ♗xe7+ ♘cxe7 22 ♖d6+ ♗d7 23 ♕h3 ♕e8 24 ♘f6 and wins) 17 ♖af1 ♗g7 18 ♖f7 ♗xe5 19 ♕xe5 ♘bc6 20 ♕xh8! and White wins, as in Glaskov-Muratov, USSR 1973.

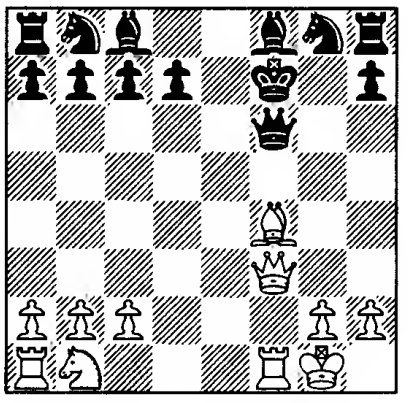
b) 13...d6 14 ♗g5 ♘bc6 15 g4 ♖g8!? (15...♕xf1+ 16 ♖xf1+ ♔e8 17 ♘d5 looks overwhelming) 16 h4! ♖xg5 17 hxg5 ♕xf1+ 18 ♖xf1+ ♔g7 19 ♕f3 gives White a strong attack.

13 ♖ae1 ♗g7 14 ♘e4 ♕f5 15 ♘d6! 1-0

Leisebein gives the variation 15...cxd6 16 ♖xe7 ♘c6 17 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 18 ♗h6+ ♔xh6 19 ♕xf5 and White wins.

Game 23
Yoos-Kirton
Saskatoon 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 g4 5 0-0 gxf3 6 ♕xf3 ♕f6 7 e5 ♕xe5 8 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 9 d4 ♕xd4+ 10 ♗e3 ♕f6 11 ♗xf4



11...♘e7

The alternative 11...♗g7? seems wholly bad. Two examples are:

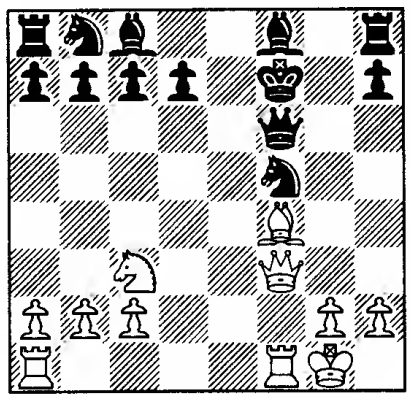
a) 12 ♕h5+ ♕g6 13 ♗xc7+ ♘f6

(13...♗f6 is the only chance) 14 ♕d5+ ♔f8 15 ♗d6+ ♔e8 16 ♖e1+ ♔d8 17 ♕e5 1-0 Lebedev-Normant, Correspondence 1987.

b) 12 ♘c3 ♘e7 13 ♘d5 ♘xd5 14 ♕xd5+ ♕e6 15 ♗d2+ ♔g8 16 ♖ae1 ♕xd5 (16...♘c6 17 ♖xe6 dxe6 fights on) 17 ♖e8+ ♗f8 18 ♗h6 and mates, Smirnov-Tikhonov, USSR 1954.

12 ♘c3 ♘f5

If 12...♗g7? then 13 ♘d5 would transpose to the Smirnov game in the last note.



13 ♗e5!!

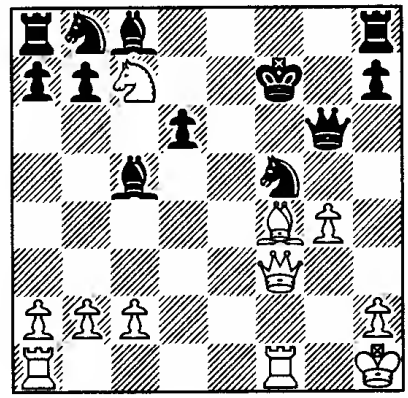
An incredible novelty in a well-known position. The two known moves are 13 ♘e4 and 13 ♘d5:

a) 13 ♘e4?! is supposed to fail, e.g. 13...♕g6 14 g4 ♗e7 15 ♔h1 ♘h4 16 ♕e3 ♔g8 17 ♗e5 b6! and the threat of 18...♗b7 refutes White's attack.

b) 13 ♘d5!? is a much better try. After 13...♕g6 Sapi and Schneider analyse 14 ♖ae1 ♗c5+ 15 ♗e3! as strong for White. Also very interesting is 14 ♘xc7!, e.g. 14...♗c5+ 15 ♔h1 d6 16 g4.

see following diagram

Now Black has a wide choice, but everything seems bad for him:



a) 16...♗d7 17 gxf5 ♕f6 18 ♕h5+ ♔g8 (18...♔e7 19 ♘d5+) 19 ♖g1+ ♗xg1 20 ♖xg1+ ♔f8 21 ♗h6+ and White wins.

b) 16...♘d4 17 ♕d5+ ♔g7 18 ♗xd6! is strong as 18...♕xd6 (18...♗xd6 19 ♕xd4+) 19 ♕f7+ ♔h6 20 ♖f6+ wins.

c) 16...♘h4 17 ♕d5+ ♔g7 18 ♗d2! ♘c6 19 ♗c3+ ♘e5 20 ♗xe5+ dxe5 21 ♕xe5+ ♔g8 22 ♖f6! with an overwhelming attack

d) 16...♘c6 17 gxf5 ♗xf5 18 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 19 ♕xf5+ ♕xf5 20 ♖xf5+ ♔g6 21 ♖f3 ♗c5 22 ♘e6 (22 ♖g3+ forces a draw by perpetual) 22...♗b6 23 ♖af1 with dangerous threats to the black king and a guaranteed draw with 24 ♖g3+ if he wants it.

However, it is hardly worth looking at these variations if 13 ♗e5 is as strong as it appears to be.

13...♕xe5

The alternatives are no better:

a) 13...♗c5+ 14 ♔h1 ♕xe5 15 ♖ae1 ♕f6 16 ♕h5+ ♔g7 17 ♖xf5 ♕g6 18 ♖g5 wins the black queen and keeps a huge attack.

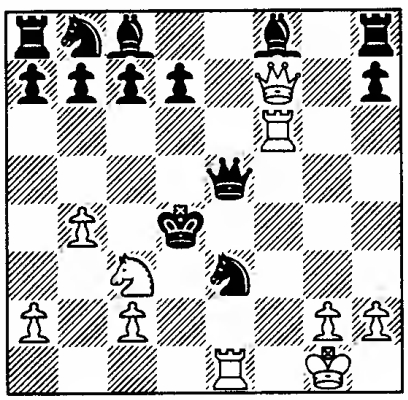
b) 13...♕b6+ 14 ♔h1 d5 (if 14...d6 15 ♕h5+ ♔g8 16 ♕g5+ ♔f7 17 ♖xf5+ ♗xf5 18 ♕xf5+ ♔e8 19 ♕c8+ ♔e7 20

♘d5+ ♔f7 21 ♖f1+ and mates quickly) 15 ♗xh8 (possibly not the best) 15...♕c6 (this looks ridiculous, but what else?) 16 ♘xd5 ♘a6 17 ♖ae1 ♔g8 18 ♗c3 and wins.

14 ♕h5+ ♔g8

An important moment. The king can advance forwards and defend the knight, but a massacre seems inevitable:

a) 14...♔e6 15 ♖ae1 ♘e3 16 ♕f7+ ♔d6 17 ♖f6+ ♔c5 18 b4+ ♔d4



19 ♖d6+!!

A real problem-like move, discovered by Fritz. The point is to clear the f-file for the queen to check on f3. Black is mated in one move after 19...♔xc3 20 ♕b3 or in two moves after 19...♗xd6 20 ♘e2+ ♔e4 21 ♕f3 or in three moves after the alternative 19...♕xd6 20 ♘b5+ ♔e4 21 ♕f3+ ♔e5 22 ♖xe3.

Actually, Fritz tells me that Black can struggle on to a mate in six by giving up all his pieces with 19...♘d5 20 ♖xd5+ ♕xd5 21 ♕xd5+ etc.

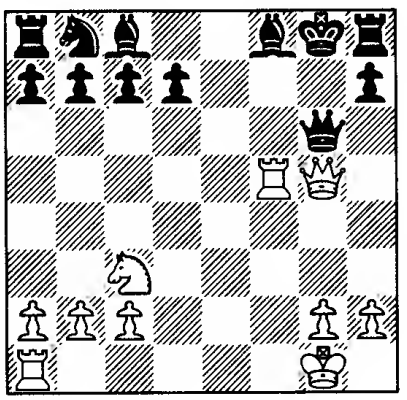
b) 14...♔f6 15 ♖xf5+! (this is much better than 15 ♖ae1, when 15...♕d4+ 16 ♔h1 d5! is none too clear) 15...♕xf5 16 ♘d5+ ♕xd5 17 ♕xd5. Black has a rook and three pieces for the queen – none of which are developed, unlike the king! It is inconceivable that the black king will survive the attack of the queen and rook, e.g. 17...♔g6 18 ♖f1 and 19 ♕f7 or 19 ♕f5+ will be decisive next move.

The only other move for the black king is 14...♔g7, but this loses at once after 15 ♕g5+ ♔f7 16 ♖xf5+. It therefore appears that Black is lost after 13 ♗e5.

15 ♖xf5 ♕e6

Black is defenceless, e.g. 15...♕g7 16 ♖af1 h6 17 ♖f7.

16 ♕g5+ ♕g6



17 ♖xf8+!

This final sacrifice forces an immediate win.

17...♔xf8 18 ♖f1+ ♔g8

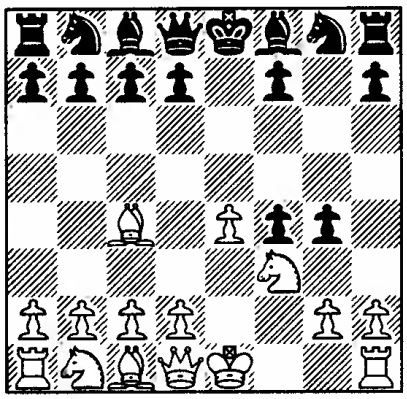
If 18...♔e8 19 ♕e5+ wins. More resistant was 18...♔g7, but 19 ♕e5+ ♔h6 (19...♔g8 20 ♕e7) 20 ♕xh8, intending 21 ♖f6 or the crude 21 ♕xc8, is decisive.

19 ♕e7! 1-0

If 19...♕g7 20 ♕e8+ mates next move. A pretty game which could be the death knell for Black in the 9...♕xd4+ Muzio.

Game 24
Lelen-Marzec
Los Angeles 1991

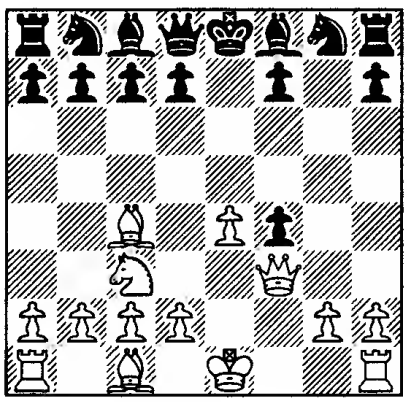
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 g4



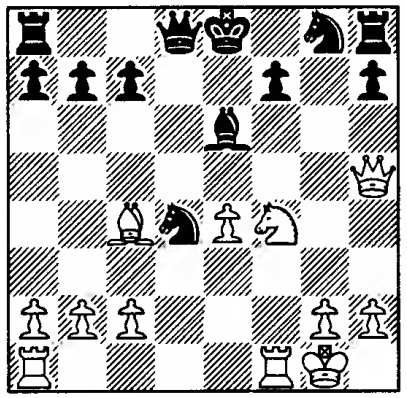
5 ♗xf7+?

The Lolli Gambit, whereby White offers the bishop rather than the knight. There are also some interesting alternatives but, unfortunately, they all seem to end in total defeat for White:

a) 5 ♘c3 is the McDonnell Gambit. Black has to be wary. 5...gxf3 6 ♕xf3 and now:



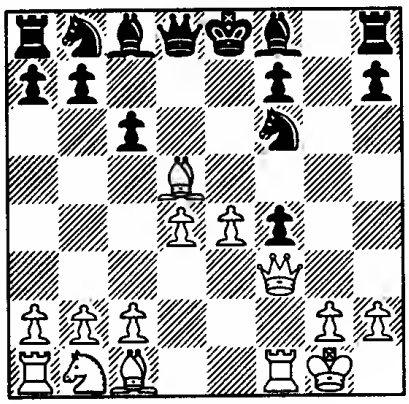
a1) 6...d5!? 7 ♘xd5 ♘c6 (the best move. After 7...♗e6 Keres recommends 8 d4!? c6 9 ♗xf4 cxd5 10 exd5 followed by 11 0-0. This second piece sacrifice looks highly dangerous for Black) 8 0-0 (bad for White is 8 ♕c3 ♕h4+ 9 ♔f1 ♗c5) 8...♗d6 9 d4 ♘xd4 10 ♕h5 ♗e6 11 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 12 ♘xf4.



Now 12...♗xc4 led to unclear play in Charousek-Marco, Vienna 1897, after 13 ♕e5+ ♔f8 14 ♕xh8 ♗xf1 15 ♖xf1 ♕f6 16 ♕xh7 ♕xf4 17 ♖xf4 ♘e2+. However, when I showed the diagram position to the Fritz program it came up with 12...♘f3+!! which seems to refute White's play, e.g. 13 ♕xf3 (or 13 ♖xf3 ♕d4+ 14 ♔h1 ♗xc4 and Black is ready to castle queenside) 13...♕d4+ (the point is to rule out 14 ♕c3) 14 ♔h1 ♗xc4 15 ♖ad1 (15 ♖fd1 ♕e5) 15...♕e5 and White is lost.

a2) 6...d6 7 d4 (after 7 0-0, 7...♗e6 is supposed to be a good defence for Black. The advantage of 7 d4 first is that 7...♗e6 can be answered by 8 d5 and 9 ♗xf4 with good compensation for the piece - Keres) 7...♘c6 8 ♗xf4. This has transposed to Fedorov-Adams, Game 25. In doing so, White can be pleased that he has avoided ...d7-d5! lines.

b) 5 d4 is the Ghulam Kassim Attack. White's wants an attacking setup similar to that in Game 25, but, as in the McDonnell Gambit above, a quick ...d7-d5 seems to give Black excellent chances: 5...gxf3 6 ♕xf3 d5! (this move is also the antidote to 6 ♗xf4 or 6 0-0) 7 ♗xd5 ♘f6 8 0-0 c6!

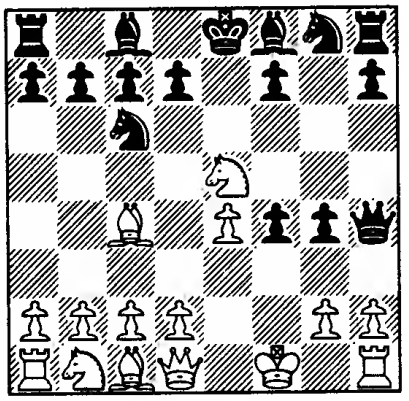


After 9 ♗b3 ♕xd4+ White's position would be collapsing, so he has to throw more wood on the fire. However, neither 9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♕xf4 ♗g7 11 e5 ♖f8 12 exf6 ♔g8! (Zak) nor 9 ♘c3 cxd5 10 exd5 ♗g7 11 ♗xf4 0-0 12 ♗g5 ♘bd7 13 ♘e4 b5 14 a4 ♗b7 15 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 16 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 17 ♕xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♖xf6 b4 (*ECO*) offers White any hope. In the first variation he is a piece down, with Black's king perfectly safe; in the second, his vulnerable pawns will soon be picked off by the black pieces in the endgame.

c) 5 ♘e5 (the Salvio Gambit) 5...♕h4+ 6 ♔f1 ♘c6! This move has been known for more than a hundred years and seems to refute White's idea:

see following diagram

c1) The great World Champion Steinitz once played 7 ♕xg4, losing material after 7...♕xg4 8 ♘xg4 d5! 9 exd5 ♘d4 (Steinitz-Hruby, Vienna 1882).



c2) 7 d4 ♘xe5 8 dxe5 ♗c5 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 ♕e2 f3 11 gxf3 ♕h3+ 12 ♔e1 gxf3 is winning for Black (Bilguer).

c3) 7 ♗xf7+ ♔e7 8 ♘xc6+ dxc6 9 ♗xg8 ♖xg8 10 ♕e1 g3 11 d4 f3 12 h3 ♗g4 13 ♕e3 ♖g6 gave Black a winning attack in Dublin University-Cambridge University, Correspondence 1892.

c4) 7 ♘xf7 (the only challenging move) 7...♗c5 8 ♕e1 g3 9 ♘xh8 ♗f2 10 ♕d1 ♘f6 11 ♗e2 (if 11 d4 d5 12 exd5 ♗g4 13 ♗e2 ♘xd4 and Black has a winning attack - Csank) 11...d6 12 c3 ♗g4 13 h3 (or 13 d4 0-0-0 14 ♘f7 ♖f8 picking up the knight with a strong initiative) 13...♘e5 14 d4 f3 15 ♗xf3 ♘xf3 16 gxf3 g2+ 17 ♔e2 ♗xf3+ and Black wins, Goncarenko-Alekseev, Correspondence 1963, as 18 ♔xf3 gxh1♕+ 19 ♕xh1 ♕xe4+ skewers the white queen.

As we shall soon see, the Lolli Gambit is also inadequate. This means that the only way for White to get reasonable chances is with the main line Muzio 5 0-0!

5...♔xf7 6 ♘e5+ ♔e8 7 ♕xg4 ♘f6 8 ♕xf4 d6 9 ♘f3

The knight has to retreat, demonstrating that White's sacrifice has failed. The consistent 9 0-0 simply leads to a lost position, e.g. 9...dxe5 10 ♕xe5+ ♔f7 11 ♕c3 ♘c6 12 e5 ♕d4+ 13 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♖xf6+ ♔g8 and Black wins.

9...♕e7

The simple move 9...♖g8, threatening 10...♖g4, was a very strong alternative.

10 ♘c3 ♘c6 11 0-0 ♖g8 12 ♘d5 ♘xd5 13 exd5 ♖g4 14 ♕xg4

Here 14 ♕e3 ♕xe3+ leaves White with a lost endgame, but the rest is a massacre.

14...♗xg4 15 ♖e1 ♘e5 16 ♘xe5 dxe5 17 d4 ♔d7 18 dxe5 ♕c5+ 19 ♗e3 ♕xd5 20 h3 ♗c5 21 hxg4 ♗xe3+ 22 ♖xe3 ♕c5 23 ♖ae1 ♖e8 24 ♔h2 ♕xc2 25 e6+ ♔c8 26 ♖1e2 ♕g6 27 e7 ♕xg4 28 ♖f3 ♖xe7 29 ♖xe7 ♕h4+ 0-1

Game 25

Fedorov-Adams

European Team Ch., Pula 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 d4

The Rosentreter Gambit.

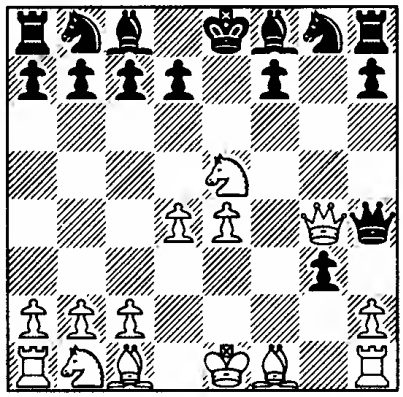
4...g4 5 ♗xf4!?

This leads to play similar to that of Game 26 below. In fact the transpositional possibilities are pretty bewildering!

The alternative was 5 ♘e5 ♕h4+ 6 g3 fxg3 7 ♕xg4

see following diagram

Now after 7...g2+? White's initiative seems to be sufficient for equality, though probably no more: 8 ♕xh4 gxh1♕ 9 ♘c3 and now:



a) 9...♘c6 10 ♕h5 ♘d8 (Black should try 10...♘xe5, though after 11 ♕xe5+ ♘e7 12 ♕xh8 ♕xh2 13 ♗e3 White is better – Schmid) 11 ♗g5!? (11 ♔f2 ♘f6 12 ♕h4 ♖g8 13 ♕xf6 ♕xh2+ 14 ♔e1 ♗g7 15 ♕f4 ♕xf4 16 ♗xf4 d6 is clearly good for Black) 11...♗e7 12 0-0-0 and White has a dangerous initiative.

b) 9...♗b4 10 ♘xf7 ♗xc3+ (10...♔xf7 11 ♕h5+ ♔f8 12 ♕f5+ ♔g7 13 ♕g5+ ♔f8 14 ♕f5+ ♔e8 15 ♕e5+ with a draw) 11 bxc3 ♔xf7 12 ♕h5+ and White has at least a draw.

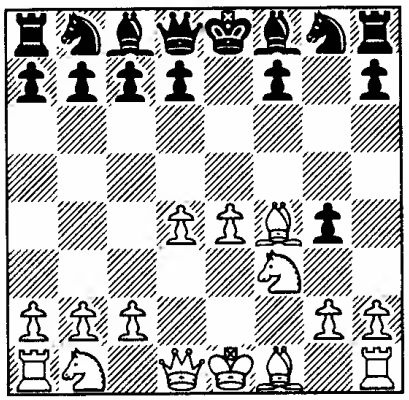
c) 9...d6! 10 ♘xf7 and:

c1) 10...♔xf7 11 ♕h5+ ♔g7 12 ♕g5+ (12 ♔f2, threatening to trap the queen with 13 ♗g2, also deserves attention. Then 12...h6!! 13 ♗g2? ♘f6 is the incredible suggestion of Fritz) 12...♔f7 13 ♕h5+ ♔g7 with a draw, as 13...♔e7 14 ♗g5+ is highly dangerous for Black.

c2) 10...♗e7 11 ♕h5 ♘f6 12 ♘xd6+ ♔d8 (12...♔d7? allows mate in six: 13 ♕f5+ ♔c6 14 d5+ ♔xd6 15 ♘b5+ ♔c5 16 ♕f2+ ♔b4 17 ♗d2+ ♔a4 18 b3

mate!) 13 ♘f7+ with perpetual check (Levenfish quoted in Zak).

However, Black can avoid all these variations with the less greedy 7...♕xg4!, when after 8 ♘xg4 d5 9 ♘e3 dxe4 10 hxg3 ♘c6 11 ♗b5 ♗d7 (*ECO*), White has some compensation for the pawn since Black's structure on the kingside is dislocated, but it is not enough.



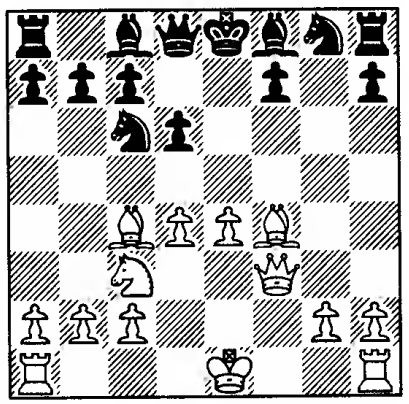
5...gxf3 6 ♕xf3 d6?!

After 6...♘c6, 7 d5 looks like a good answer (7...♘d4 8 ♕d3).

However, according to theory Black can gain the advantage with 6...d5! Then 7 exd5 ♘f6 8 ♗b5+ c6 9 ♗e5 ♗g7 10 dxc6 bxc6 11 ♗xc6+ (11 0-0 is similar, e.g. 11...0-0 12 ♗xc6 [12 ♗d3? ♘bd7 13 ♕xc6 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♗d7 15 ♕a6 ♘g4 is very good for Black] 12...♘xc6 13 ♕xc6 ♗e6 14 ♕f3 ♘g4 15 ♗xg7 ♔xg7) 11...♘xc6 12 ♕xc6+ ♗d7 13 ♕f3 0-0 14 0-0 ♘e8 is better for Black (*ECO*). Play could continue 15 ♗xg7 ♘xg7 16 c3 ♕b6 etc., when in the middlegame the black bishop will prove more valuable than the three white pawns. I wonder what improvement Fedorov had in mind?

7 ♘c3 ♘c6 8 ♗c4

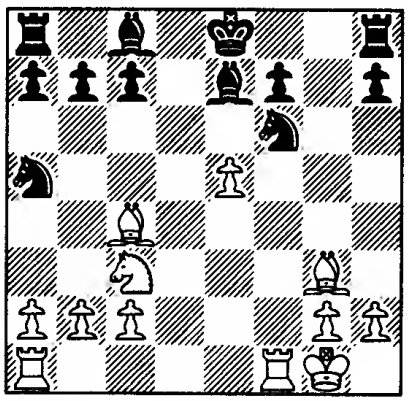
Now we have a reached a position from Mortazavi-Miles (see the note at move seven to Game 26 below), but with the moves ♗xf4 and ...d7-d6 thrown in. White is planning 0-0 etc. to start an attack aimed principally at f7, so Adams forces the exchange of queens. However, according to Fedorov in *Informator 69*, Black could have snatched the d-pawn: 8...♘xd4! 9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♕h5+ ♔g7 11 0-0 ♘f6 12 ♗h6+ ♔g8 13 ♕g5+ ♔f7 14 ♕h5+ ♔e6 15 ♕h3+ ♔e7 16 ♕h4 ♘f5! and Black should win. Of course, this variation by no means exhausts all the tactical resources available to White in the position. I'm sure most players would be too terrified to enter this variation as Black, despite Fedorov's assurances (especially if they were playing Fedorov). One possible improvement is the calm 11 0-0-0, attacking the knight and with ideas of 12 ♖d3. Then 11...♘e6? 12 ♗e5+ would be awkward for Black, while 11...♘c6 12 e5! keeps up the initiative. In any case, it is no surprise that Black ducked the challenge in the game.



8...♕h4+!? 9 ♗g3 ♕f6 10 ♕xf6

♘xf6 11 0-0 ♘xd4?

Despite the exchange of queens, White maintains a dangerous initiative with ideas of capturing on f7 and overrunning the black king's defences after 12 e5. Black therefore returns the piece and submits to a worse endgame. The critical variation is 11...♗e7 12 e5 (both 12 ♗h4 ♘g4 and 12 ♘b5 ♔d8 13 e5 ♘e4! are nothing for White) 12...dxe5 (Fedorov gives 12...♘d7 13 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 14 ♖ad1 with unclear play) 13 dxe5 (13 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♗c5+ 15 ♔h1 ♘g4 leaves Black better) 13...♘a5!



The point is that 14 exf6 is answered by 14...♗c5+! and then 15...♘xc4.

White can maintain the pressure with 14 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 15 ♘e4, but the position is by no means clear.

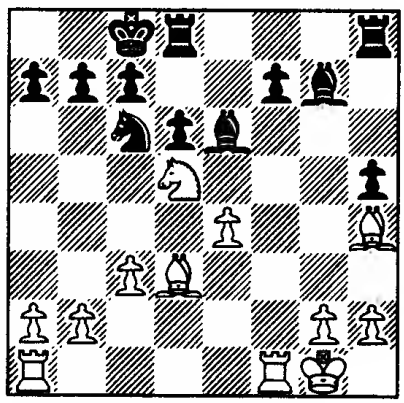
12 ♖xf6 ♗e6 13 ♗d3?

Of course he avoids strengthening Black's pawn structure with 13 ♗xe6? fxe6. However, according to Fedorov 13 ♘d5 was better, when White has a clear advantage after 13...0-0-0 14 c3 ♘c6 15 ♖af1 etc.

13...♗g7 14 ♖ff1 ♘c6 15 ♘d5 0-0-0

Black could have equalised with 15...♗xb2!, e.g. 16 ♘xc7+ ♔d7 17 ♘xa8 ♗xa1 18 ♘b6+ axb6 19 ♖xa1 (Fedorov).

16 c3 h5 17 ♗h4!



This fixes the h-pawn on a vulnerable square and eyes f6. It is now apparent that White has a clear advantage. The black f7- and h5-pawns are split and vulnerable and the weakness of the f6-square is more important than White's own hole on e5.

17...♖de8 18 ♗c2 ♗e5

Although e5 is a good square for any black piece, 18...♘e5 was more natural, planning ...c7-c6. Instead Adams intends to utilise the g-file for his rooks, which only leads to a further worsening of his chances.

19 ♖f2 ♖hg8 20 g3 ♖g4 21 ♘e3 ♖g7 22 ♘f5 ♖h7 23 a3 a6 24 ♖d1 b5

A bid for counterplay on the queenside.

25 ♘d4 ♘a5 26 a4 c5 27 ♘f3 ♔c7 28 axb5 axb5 29 ♗d3 ♘c4 30 ♖a1 ♖b8 31 ♖a7+ ♖b7 32 ♖xb7+ ♔xb7 33 b3 ♘a5 34 ♘xe5

White adds the two bishops to his other positional advantages. The e5-pawn will be fatally weak.

34...dxe5 35 ♗xb5 ♘xb3 36 ♗f6 c4 37 ♗xe5 h4 38 ♗e8 h3 39 ♖f4 ♖h5 40 ♗g7 ♘c5 41 ♗xf7 ♖h7 42 ♗d4 ♖xf7 43 ♗xc5 ♔c6 44 ♖xf7 ♗xf7

Black has defended tenaciously and forced play into an opposite-coloured bishop endgame. However, White now wins with some accurate play.

45 ♗d4 ♗g6 46 e5 ♔d5 47 ♔f2 ♔e4 48 e6 ♔d5 49 e7 ♔e6 50 ♗c5 ♔d5 51 ♗b4 ♔e4 52 ♗a5! ♗f7 53 ♗c7

Now all is ready to advance the g-pawn. Black's blockade crumbles.

53...♔d3 54 g4 ♔xc3 55 ♔e3 ♔b4 56 ♔d4 ♔b5 57 ♔e5 ♔c6 58 ♔f6 ♗e8 59 ♗e5 1-0

The g-pawn marches through. Even if Black could somehow take the e- and g-pawns for his bishop, White would win with the bishop and 'right' rook's pawn.

Game 26
Polasek-Karolyi
Prague 1988

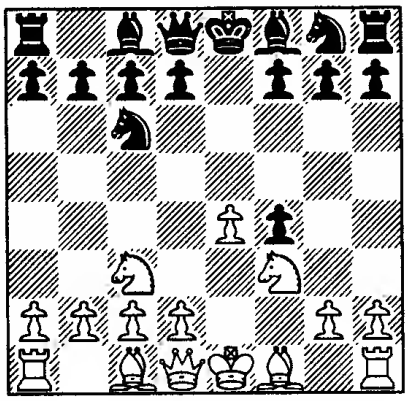
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 ♘c3

Game, 1 e4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 f4 exf4 4 ♘f3, which is in fact the most common move order.

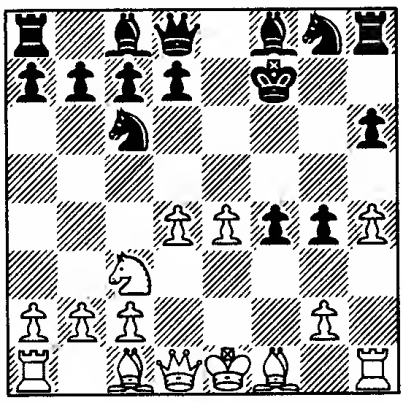
Gallagher points out that in the King's Gambit move order White has the extra possibility of 4 d4!? Theory condemns this move, but not Joe! In his book, he analyses this move all the way through to a rook and pawn endgame 28 moves deep. King's Gambit aficionados will be pleased to know that White wins the race to queen! In summary, one variation of Gallagher's after 4 d4 that seems satisfactory for Black, but no more, is 4...d5 5 exd5 ♕xd5 6 ♗xf4 ♗g4 7 ♘c3 (if 7 ♗xc7 then 7...♖c8! followed by 8...♗xf3 is good for Black) 7...♗b4 8 ♗e2 0-0-0 9 0-0 ♕d7 10 d5 ♗xc3 11 dxc6 ♕xc6 12 ♘e5! ♕c5+ 13 ♔h1 ♗xe2 (taking the queen is bad after 14 ♗xg4+) 14 ♕xe2 ♗xe5 15 ♗xe5 ♘f6 16 ♗xf6 gxf6 17 ♖xf6 with approximate equality.

4...g5 5 d4

A major decision. White could enter Allgaier type lines with 5 h4 g4 (forced) 6 ♘g5 h6 7 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 8 d4.

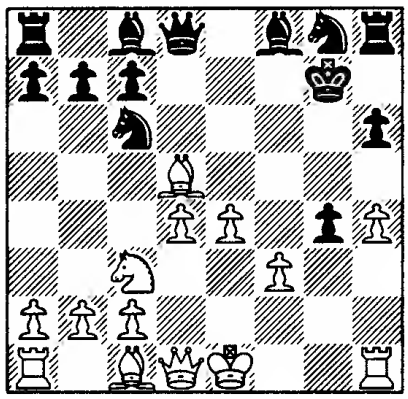


For the sake of clarity I have changed the order of moves in this game. It actually began via the Vienna



The difference is that the queen's knights are out. Now 8...f3!? is critical (also possible is 8...d5, but this seems

stronger) when Gallagher-Hresc, Geneva 1991, continued 9 ♗c4+ d5 10 ♗xd5+ ♔g7 11 gxf3.



In the game White achieved a good position after 11...♗b4 12 ♗e3 ♘f6 13 ♗c4 ♕e7 14 ♕e2. He castled queenside and then began a decisive attack on the kingside. However, Black's play is not altogether logical. Having played 8...f3, he should have seized the chance to disrupt the smooth build-up of White's game with 11...♗e7! Then after 12 0-0 (the best answer to the threatened check on h4) White's king has been forced to live in the airy wastes of the kingside rather than in comfortable retirement on the queenside. Gallagher assesses the position as unclear after 12...♗xh4 13 f4. However, after the plausible 13...♘f6 14 ♗e3 ♖e8 I think that Black has a clear advantage. His king is safe, his pieces are mobilised and the formidable-looking white centre is in fact vulnerable (if 15 ♕d3 ♘b4).

Therefore, 5 d4 looks a better try for White.

5...g4 6 ♗c4

The Pierce Gambit.

6...gxf3 7 0-0

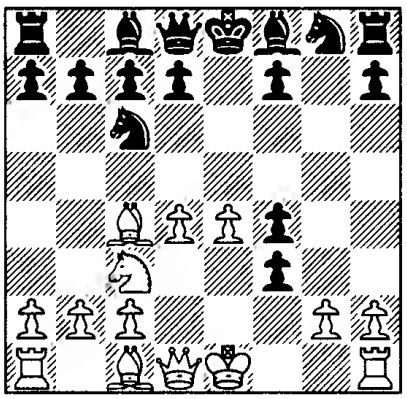
Two other moves should be considered here:

a) 7 ♕xf3!? was tried in Mortazavi-Miles, London 1994. If now 7...♘xd4 8 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 9 ♕h5+ ♔g7 (Black could try to win with 9...♔e7. However, this seems highly dangerous after 10 ♘d5+ [also worthy of attention are 10 ♕e5+ ♘e6 11 ♕xh8 and 10 ♕h4+ ♘f6 11 e5] 10...♔d6 11 ♗xf4+) 10 ♕g4+ ♔f7 seems a forced draw by repetition. If White plays for an advantage with 11 0-0 then 11...♘f6 should be good for Black who after all has two extra pieces.

Miles in fact played to win with 7...d5! 8 ♘xd5 (the problem with 8 exd5 is that 8...♘xd4 9 ♕e4+ ♕e7 forces off the queens) 8...♘xd4 9 ♕xf4 ♗d6 (9...♘xc2+ 10 ♔f1 ♘xa1? 11 ♘xc7+ is bad for Black) 10 ♕f2 (10 e5 is possibly a better try) 10...♘c6 11 ♗f4 ♘e5 12 0-0! (or else 12 ♗b3 ♗e6 and White can resign) 12...♘xc4 13 ♕d4 f6 14 ♕xc4 and now according to Mortazavi 14...c6 ends White's compensation for the piece. However, White can carry on attacking with 15 ♘xf6+!? ♘xf6 (15...♕xf6? 16 ♗xd6! ♕xd6 17 ♕f7+ ♔d8 18 ♖ad1 wins) 16 e5 etc. with unclear play. Instead the game continued 14...♗xf4 15 ♘xf4 c6 16 e5! and White had a dangerous initiative. It seems that 7 ♕xf3 offers reasonable practical chances for White, even though it feels suspect. However, it is rather spoilt by the fact that Black can force a draw with 7...♘xd4.

b) 7 ♗xf4 is suggested by Gallagher. If now 7...fxg2? 8 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 9 ♕h5+ ♔g7 10 ♖g1 wins. And if 7...♗g7? 8 0-0 ♗xd4+ 9 ♔h1 ♗xc3?!

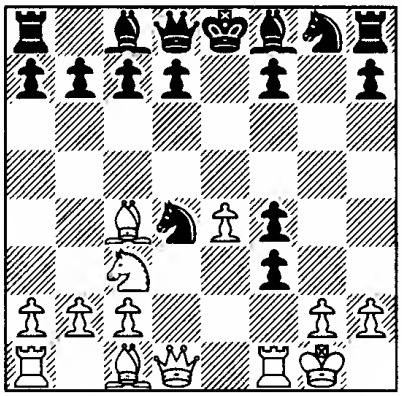
10 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 11 ♕d5+ ♔e8 (11...♔g7 12 ♖xf3!) 12 ♕h5+ ♔e7 13 e5! gives White a decisive attack – Glaskov and Estrin. However, why not use the f-pawn to disrupt White's plan of 0-0? After 7...f2+! 8 ♔xf2 ♗g7 the white king is badly placed on the f-file. I think that Black is doing nicely.



7 0-0 ♘xd4!

Other known moves include 7...d5 and 7...d6, but I believe this to be the strongest. Black exploits a tactical feature of the position to win White's d-pawn, as after 8 ♕xd4?? ♕g5! both 9...♕xg2 mate and 9...♗c5 winning the queen are threatened. There would be no adequate defence against both threats, as 9 ♕f2 ♗c5 would still win the queen while 9 ♖f2 ♗c5 10 ♗xf4 ♗xd4 11 ♗xg5 ♘e7 12 ♖d1 (12 gxf3 ♖g8) 12...♗xf2+ 13 ♔xf2 fxg2 would leave White a lot of material down.

White therefore loses his central d-pawn. The loss of a mere pawn may not seem vital when it is considered that White has gambited a whole piece. However, the d-pawn was essential for White's plans. Now he can no longer hope to overrun Black with a pawn storm in the centre. Nor can he simplify to a endgame where he has two or three pawns and a strong centre as compensation for the piece. And finally, he has lost control of the important dark squares c5 and e5. I think that 7 0-0 has been refuted by this move.



8 ♗xf4 ♗c5 9 ♗xf7+

Gallagher suggests that 9 ♔h1 is a better try. However, Black has many good continuations, for example 9...d6 10 ♗e3 (White has to try and attack down the f-file; 10 gxf3 ♗e6 is hopeless) 10...♗e6!? (returning the extra material to seize the initiative) 11 ♗xd4 fxg2+ 12 ♔xg2 ♗xc4 13 ♗xh8 ♕g5+ 14 ♔h1 ♗xf1 15 ♕xf1 0-0-0 16 ♕xf7 ♘h6 17 ♕f6 ♕g4! and since 18 ♕xh6 ♕f3 is mate, Black can play 18...♖g8 next move with a decisive attack along the g-file.

9...♔xf7 10 ♗e3 ♔e8!

Black is happy to return one piece in order to break the attack. Less clear is 10...♕f6 11 ♘d5.

11 ♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 12 ♕xd4 ♕f6!

This gains time as 13 e5 ♕b6 would exchange queens and win easily. White's only hope is a middlegame attack.

13 ♕d3 ♘e7 14 ♖xf3 ♕e5 15 ♘d5 c6!

This drives the knight from its central post and prepares a hole on c7 for the king.

16 ♘f6+ ♔d8 17 ♘xd7!?

The alternative 17 ♖d1 sets some nasty traps, for example 17...d5? 18 exd5 ♗f5 (winning a second piece but ...) 19 ♕d2! ♕xf6 20 dxc6+ ♔c7 21 ♕f4+! ♔c8 22 cxb7+ ♔xb7 23 ♖d7+! and Black has to give up his queen with 23...♗xd7 24 ♕xf6 or be mated. Also bad for Black is 17...♕e6 18 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 (18...♔c7 19 ♘f8! threatens mate on d8, while 18...♗xd7 19 ♖f6! drives the queen from the defence of d7, e.g. 19...♕g4 20 h3! ♕xd1+ 21 ♕xd1 and White has a dangerous attack) 19 ♕f1 ♘d5 20 exd5 cxd5 21 ♖fd3! and White threatens 22 ♖xd5 or 22 ♕f6+. However, Black has a simple reply to 17 ♖d1: 17...d6! and, since capturing on d6 gives a lost endgame, the white attack is at an end.

17...♗xd7 18 ♖d1 ♘d5!

Black avoids 18...♕e6 19 ♖f6! ♕g4 20 h3. A less straightforward path is 18...♕c7 19 ♕c3 ♖g8 20 ♖fd3 ♔e8 21 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 22 ♖xd7 ♔xd7, though Black should win 'on points'.

19 exd5 cxd5

Avoiding the pitfall 19...♕xd5? 20 c4! ♕c5+ (20...♕xd3 21 ♖fxd3) 21 ♖f2! ♕e7 22 ♖fd2.

20 ♖e3 ♕d6 21 c4 ♕c5!

This threatens a pin with 22...♖e8, and so forces White to move his king, when back-rank mate themes emerge.

22 ♔h1 ♖f8 23 cxd5 ♕b5!

See the last note. Now the white queen is forced to a passive square as 24 ♕d4 ♖f1+ mates.

24 ♕b1 ♖c8

Black completes development and is now ready to assume the initiative.

25 ♖b3 ♕e2 26 ♖e1 ♕f2 27 ♖xb7 ♖c2 28 ♖g1 ♖g8 29 ♕f1 ♖f8?

So far Karolyi has played excellently, but here he misses an immediate win with 29...♕xf1 30 ♖xf1 ♖gxg2 31 ♖f7 (or 31 ♖f8+ ♔e7) 31...♖gd2! 32 ♖bxd7+ ♔c8 and White has no defence against a back-rank mate that doesn't cost a rook. As played, Black should still be winning easily enough, but he makes it an excruciating experience for both players by allowing the game to drift into a laborious technical endgame. The remaining moves were:

30 ♕xf2 ♖fxf2 31 ♖xa7 ♖xb2 32 a4 ♗f5 33 ♖g7 ♖a2 34 h4 ♖xa4 35 ♔h2 ♖xh4+ 36 ♔g3 ♖ff4 37 ♖a1 ♖hg4+ 38 ♖xg4 ♖xg4+ 39 ♔f3 ♖d4 40 ♖a5 ♔d7 41 ♔e3 ♖e4+ 42 ♔f3 ♔d6 43 ♖a2 ♔xd5 44 ♔g3 ♔e5 45 ♖b2 ♔f6 46 ♖a2 ♔g5 47 ♖b2 ♖d4 48 ♔h2 ♖d3 49 ♖a2 ♖c3 50 ♖b2 ♗e4 51 ♖e2 ♔f4 52 ♖f2+ ♔e3 53 ♖f7 ♖c2 54 ♖g7 ♖c6 55 ♖a7 ♖c2 56 ♖g7 ♗g6 57 ♖a7 ♔f2 58 ♖a4 ♖b2 59 ♖f4+ ♔e1 60 ♔g1 ♖e2 61 ♖g4 ♖e4 62 ♖g3 ♔e2 63 ♖a3 ♖c4 64 ♖a2+ ♖c2 65 ♖a4 ♖d2 66 ♖f4 ♔e3 67 ♖f3+ ♔d4 68 ♖g3 ♗e4 69 ♖g5 ♔e3 70 ♖g3+ ♔e2 71 ♖g7 ♖c2 72 ♖e7 ♔e3 73 ♖g7 ♖c1+ 74 ♔h2 ♖a1 75 ♖g3+ ♔f2 76 ♖g7 ♖a2 77 ♖d7 ♖e2 78 ♖d1 ♗xg2 79 ♖d2 ♗f3 0-1

Summary

After 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 g5 4 ♗c4 ♗g7 neither the Philidor Gambit 5 h4 h6 6 d4 d6 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 c3 ♘f6 (Game 19) nor the Hanstein Gambit 5 0-0 d6 6 d4 h6 7 c3 ♘c6 (Game 20) is satisfactory for White. By omitting 4 h4 (to force 4...g4) White allows his opponent to set up a solid wall of pawns on the kingside, which frustrates all his attacking aspirations. The Muzio Gambit 4 ♗c4 g4 5 0-0 is a lot of fun, but this may also be unsound for White (see the notes to Game 22). White's other alternatives after 3...g5, such as the Allgaier, Lolli and Pierce Gambits are also unsound, so White should prefer the Kieseritzky (Chapter 2).

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3

3...g5

3...♘c6 – *Game 26*

4 ♗c4

4 h4 g4 5 ♘g5 – *Game 18*

4 d4 – *Game 25*

4...♗g7

4...g4

5 0-0 gxf3 6 ♕xf3 ♕f6 7 e5 ♕xe5 *(D)*

8 d3 – *Game 21*

8 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 9 d4 ♕xd4+ 10 ♗e3 ♕f6 11 ♘c3 ♘e7

12 ♗xf4 *(D)*

12...♔g8 – *Game 22*

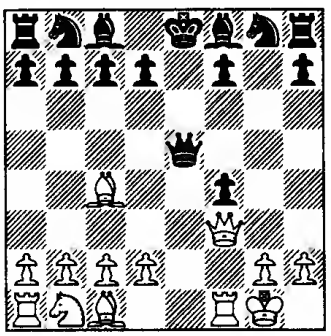
12...♘f5 – *Game 23*

5 ♗xf7+ – *Game 24*

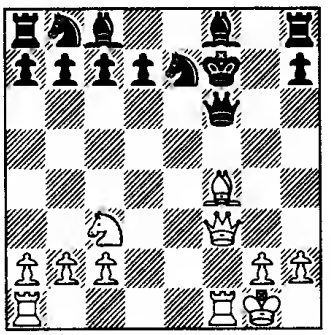
5 h4 *(D)*

5 0-0 – *Game 20*

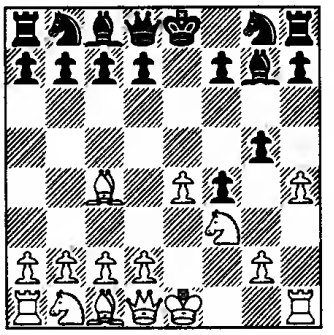
5...h6 – *Game 19*



7...♕xe5

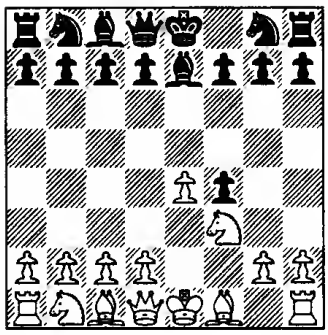


12 ♗xf4



5 h4

CHAPTER FOUR



Cunningham Defence (3 ♘f3 ♗e7)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7

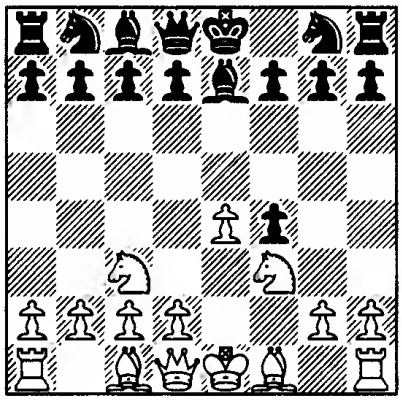
The Cunningham 3...♗e7 is a very solid response to the King's Gambit. Black avoids creating weaknesses in his kingside pawn structure with 3...g5 or 3...d6 4 d4 g5, so his king should be safe on the kingside. His counterplay rests in the ...d7-d5 advance to undermine White's centre and gain freedom of action for his pieces. An important question is whether Black should play ...♗h4+ to force the white king to give up castling. This check is very tempting, but the loose placement of the bishop on h4 makes this move problematic. Of course, 4...♗h4+ should be stronger after 4 ♘c3 (Games 27-28) than after 4 ♗c4 (Games 29-31), since in the former case White has to play 5 ♔e2, which shuts in his bishop on f1.

Game 27
Short-Piket
Madrid 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♘c3

A bold move, which dares Black to play 4...♗h4+. Short is in no mood for compromise!

The alternative is 4 ♗c4, after which Black's check on h4 is less embarrassing, as the white king has a haven on f1. This move will be considered in Games 29-31.



4...♗h4+

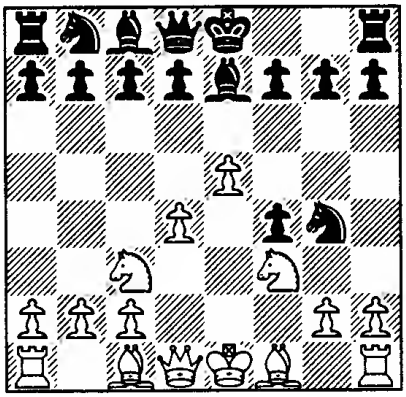
Piket accepts the challenge. A more solid alternative was 4...♘f6, when two moves are worth looking at:

a) 5 e5 ♘g4 6 d4.

see following diagram

This is an important position. Black

now has:



a1) 6...♗h4+ (this check is now critical) 7 ♔e2 ♘e3 8 ♕d3! (this looks better than 8 ♗xe3 fxe3 9 ♔xe3 d6 10 exd6, as in Bangiev-Egin, Simferopol 1985, when 10...0-0! gives Black a dangerous attack) 8...0-0 9 g3! ♘xf1 (9...♗e7 10 gxf4 ♘xf1 11 ♖xf1 gives White a huge centre) 10 ♗xf4! and White regains his piece next move with a good game.

a2) 6...♘e3 7 ♗xe3 fxe3 8 ♗c4 d6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♕d3 ♘c6 11 exd6 ♗xd6 (this is better than 11...cxd6, when White had a clear advantage after 12 ♖ae1 in Spassky-Holmov, Leningrad 1963) 12 ♕xe3 (if 12 ♘e4 Black can try to hold on to his extra pawn with 12...♗f4!?) 12...♗g4 (12...♗f5 looks a little dangerous after 13 ♘e5 ♗xe5 14 dxe5 ♗xc2 15 e6, but may be playable) 13 ♘g5?! ♗h5 and Black's two bishops compensate for White's extra centre pawn and pressure along the f-file.

a3) 6...d6!? aims to lead play into variations examined later after 4 ♗c4. Thus after 7 exd6 ♕xd6 8 ♗c4 0-0 9 0-0 ♕h6 we have reached the diagram at move nine in Game 31. White can try 8 ♘b5 to exploit Black's irregular move order, but 6...d6 may still be Black's best option here.

b) 5 d4 d5 6 ♗d3 dxe4 7 ♘xe4 ♘c6 8 ♗xf4 0-0 9 c3 ♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 ♗h4+ 11 ♔f1 ♗g4 12 ♕d3 ♔h8 and White had some advantage in Lukin-Faibisovich, Leningrad 1967.

5 ♔e2 d5

Again the most aggressive approach. Piket wants to attack the ridiculously placed white king as quickly as possible and therefore opens lines in the centre.

Black has other, quieter moves such as 5...♗e7 and 5...♗g5, but then White can carry out a plan of d2-d4, ♔f2 and ♗c4 (perhaps ♗d3), unravelling his kingside and probably emerging with a slight advantage due to his better pawn structure. If Black tries a more gradual pawn attack with 5...c6, then he has to reckon with Hebden's idea of 6 d4 d5 7 ♕d2!, when in Gallagher-Faure, Geneva 1989, White obtained a small advantage after 7...dxe4 8 ♘xe4 ♘f6 9 ♕xf4 ♘xe4 10 ♕xe4+ ♕e7 11 ♔d3! ♕xe4+ 12 ♔xe4. As Gallagher remarks, White's king is well centralised for the endgame!

6 ♘xd5 ♘f6

Black can play even more aggressively with 6...♗g4 7 d4 f5. Then Gallagher-Jacobs, Calella 1985, continued 8 ♕d3 ♘e7 9 ♘xf4 ♘bc6 10 c3 ♕d7 11 e5 g5. Now White fell for a trap with 12 g3? gxf4 13 gxh4 ♘xe5! Instead, Gallagher recommends 12 ♘h3 as better for White. This seems correct, e.g. 12...h6?! (12...♗xf3+ is better, but then 13 gxf3 0-0-0 14 f4! prevents ♘xe5 and leaves White with a strong centre) 13 g3! (trapping the bishop)

13...♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♕xd3+ 15 ♔xd3 ♗xf3 16 ♖g1 g4 (16...♖d8+ 17 ♔e3) 17 gxh4 gxh3 18 ♗xh3 looks winning for White in view of the two bishops and fairly useful extra pawn (but of course he should be careful to answer 17...♖d8+ with 18 ♔c4 rather than 18 ♔c2 ♗d1 mate!).

7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 d4

Here 8 d3!? ♗g4 9 ♕d2 is a similar and more cautious version of the game continuation. However, unless the piece sacrifice of Game 28 proves good for Black (which seems doubtful) White has no reason to avoid gaining space by pushing the pawn two squares rather than one.

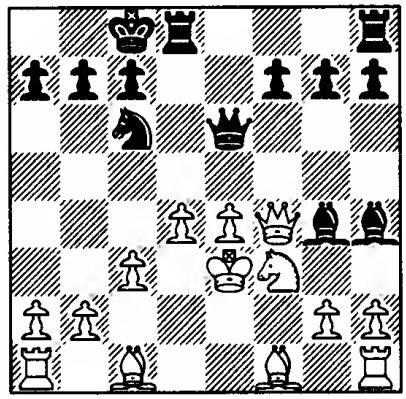
8...♗g4 9 ♕d2

White clears the d1-square for his king with gain of time by attacking the f4-pawn. More commonly seen is 9 c3, which gives Black the extra option of 9...c5 (9...♘c6 10 ♕d2 transposes to the game). However, in Arnason-Wedberg, Randers 1985, this turned out badly for Black: 10 dxc5 ♕e7 11 ♕d5! ♘d7 12 ♗xf4 ♘f6 13 ♕e5 ♘xe4 14 ♔e3! (a favourite haunt for the white monarch in this variation, as Short's king also ends up on this square in our main game) 14...♗xf3 15 ♗b5+ ♔f8 16 ♕xe7+ ♗xe7 17 ♔xf3 ♘xc5 and White had a sizeable advantage in view of his bishop pair, queenside pawn majority and the uncomfortable position of the black king.

9...♘c6 10 c3 0-0-0?

This is totally bad. Black had to preserve his kingside clump of pawns with 10...g5, for which see the next game.

11 ♕xf4 ♕e6 12 ♔e3!



Short was very pleased with this move, which introduces two threats, the obvious 13 ♘xh4 and the sneaky 13 ♗c4!, when 13...♕xc4 14 ♕xg4+ picks up the other bishop next move. Since 11...♗xf3 12 gxf3 is positional capitulation, Piket decided on an all or nothing attack.

12...g5 13 ♘xg5 ♗xg5 14 ♕xg5 f5 15 h3!

A nonchalant move. Short says that he thought 15 e5? ♘xe5 16 dxe5 ♕b6+ 17 ♔f4 ♕f2 mate was best avoided. Probably this is the way the game might have ended 150 years ago.

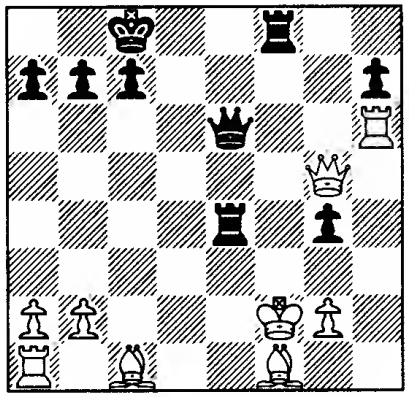
15...♘xd4

15...♕xe4+ 16 ♔f2 ♗d1 17 ♕f4 ♕c2+ 18 ♕d2 ♕a4 19 ♗d3 is entirely hopeless for Black – Short.

16 cxd4 ♖xd4 17 hxg4

The correct capture. 17 ♔xd4 would be too outrageous, even though White may still be winning, e.g. 17...♖d8+ 18 ♕xd8+! or 17...♕xe4+ (17...♕b6+ 18 ♔c3) 18 ♔c3 ♕e5+ (18...♕c6+ 19 ♗c4) 19 ♔c2 and the king evades the checks.

17...♖xe4+ 18 ♔f2 fxg4 19 ♖h6 ♖f8+



20 ♔g1??

Short sets the scene in his *Sunday Telegraph* chess column: 'I had seen that 20 ♔g3 ♕f7 21 ♗e3 ♖g8 22 ♕c5 b6 23 ♕c3 was the end of the excitement, but I became obsessed with the idea that Black might be able to give an (imaginary) check with his queen on the b8-h2 diagonal. I decided to play the safer move.'

It only remains to add that Piket was in almost fatal time pressure with 20 moves to go and that Short was trembling uncontrollably. Yes, the King's Gambit is not for the faint hearted.

20...♖xf1+ 21 ♔xf1 ♖e1+ 22 ♔f2 ♕e2+?

Black could have forced perpetual check with 22...♖e2+! 23 ♔g3 ♖xg2+ 24 ♔xg2 ♕e2+. This would have been an amazing finish: Black is two rooks and a bishop down, but forces a draw with his last piece! Certainly a reminder never to give up hope. Though in fairness to Piket (and Short) it should be remembered that Black was desperately short of time. And, of course, he wouldn't have been short of time but for the novel problems that Short's unexpected opening had set him.

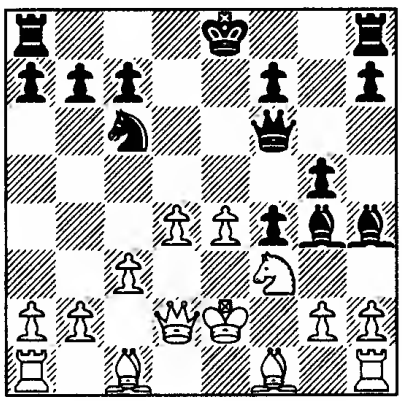
23 ♔g3 ♕d3+ 24 ♔xg4 1-0

Black resigned since the checks soon dry up, when White wins on points.

Game 28
Gallagher-Klovans
Oberwart 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♘c3 ♗h4+ 5 ♔e2 d5 6 ♘xd5 ♘f6 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 d4 ♗g4 9 ♕d2 ♘c6 10 c3 g5

This is much better than Piket's 10...0-0-0 in Game 27.



11 ♔d1 0-0-0 12 ♔c2 ♖he8!?

Standard theory gives 12...♗xf3 13 gxf3, when the strong white centre and bishop pair give White the advantage. Gallagher also mentions 12...♕h6 13 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 14 g3! with advantage to White. No doubt Joe was hoping for this when he was rocked back with 12...♖he8.

13 ♗d3

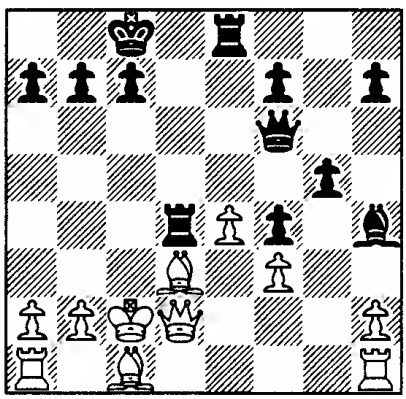
White sensibly declines the offer. Klovans later demonstrated in *Informator 58* that Black has a vicious attack after 13 ♘xh4 ♖xe4!, e.g. 14 ♘f3

(or 14 ♗d3 ♘xd4+! 15 cxd4 ♖exd4 16 ♕c3 gxh4 17 b3 h3 18 gxh3 ♗f5 with a dangerous attack for Black) 14...♗f5! 15 ♗d3 g4 16 ♘e1 (16 ♖e1 looks better, though Black has a strong initiative after 16...♖e3 17 ♖xe3 fxe3 18 ♕xe3 gxf3 19 ♕xf3 ♗xd3+ 20 ♕xd3 ♖xd4!) 16...♘xd4+! 17 cxd4 ♖exd4 18 ♕c3 ♕e6 19 ♗xf5 ♕xf5+ 20 ♔b3 ♕b5+ 21 ♔c2 ♖c4 winning the white queen and keeping up the onslaught.

13...♗xf3 14 gxf3 ♘xd4+!

Black has to do or die, since slow play leaves White with a clear positional plus.

15 cxd4 ♖xd4



16 ♕c3?

White hastens to break the pin on the d-file, but why not 16 a4!, e.g. 16...♖ed8 17 ♖a3 bringing the queen's rook into the defence. It is hard to believe in the strength of Black's attack, since besides the piece sacrificed the bishop on h4 makes little contribution to the game.

16...♖e6

Now the rook on a1 remains out of the game and Black's initiative compensates for the missing piece in view of the awkward congestion of white pieces in the centre.

17 ♔b1 ♖c6 18 ♕b3 a5 19 a3 a4 20 ♕b5 ♔b8 21 ♗e2 ♕d8 22 ♖f1 ♖b6 23 ♕c5 ♖c6 24 ♕b5 ♖b6 25 ♕a5 ♖b3 26 ♕e5 f6 27 ♕c5 ♖b6 28 ♕a5 ♕d6 29 ♔a2?!

A mistake. Klovans suggests that 29 ♖a2 would have been unclear.

29...♕e6+ 30 ♔b1 ♕d6?

Black misses the chance of 30...♖xe4!, when White has to grovel with 30 ♗d3 as 31 fxe4? ♕xe4+ 32 ♔a2 ♕e6+ 33 ♔b1 ♕xe2 34 ♖g1 ♗f2 would win for Black.

31 ♔a2 ♕e6+ ½-½

The surprise value of ...♖he8 gained Klovans an easy draw as Black, but I doubt if the experiment should be repeated

Game 29
Gallagher-Neussner
Loosdorf 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♗c4 ♗h4+

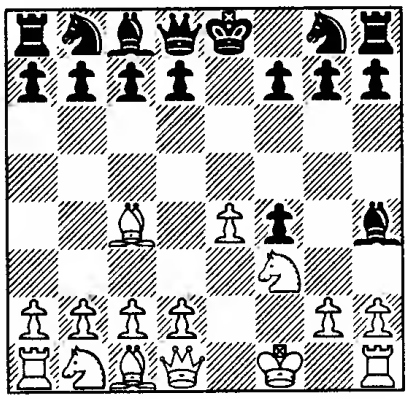
This check is not so attractive in this position, when compared to 4 ♘c3, since White has cleared f1 for his king. Nevertheless, it is a fighting move which sets difficult problems for both players.

The quieter 4...♘f6 is the subject of Game 31.

5 ♔f1

The Cunningham Gambit 5 g3?! is virtually refuted by 5...fxg3 6 0-0 d5! (instead 6...gxh2+ plays into White's hands. After 7 ♔h1 d5 8 ♗xd5 ♘f6 9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♘xh4 ♖f8 11 ♕f3 ♔g8 12 d3 an unclear position is reached. White has a strong centre but his king-

side is denuded of pawn cover) 7 ♗xd5 ♘f6 8 ♗xf7+ (8 ♘xh4 ♘xd5 favours Black) 8...♔xf7 9 e5 (9 ♘xh4 ♕d4+) 9...♗h3 10 exf6 ♗xf1 11 ♕xf1 gxh2+ 12 ♔h1 ♗xf6 and Black had a winning material advantage in Krejcik-Schlechter, Vienna 1918.



5...d5

The only good move. Black wants to develop his king's knight to f6 without dropping the bishop on h4 and 5...♗e7 wastes too much time after 6 d4.

6 ♗xd5

Almost universally played, but 6 exd5 is an interesting alternative, after which Black has to retreat his bishop. Perhaps best play is 6...♗f6 7 d4 g5 (7...♘e7 8 ♘c3 ♘g6 9 ♘e2 ♕d6 10 ♕d2 looks better for White) 8 ♘c3 ♗f5 9 h4 h6 etc. with unclear play.

6...♘f6

This is the point of Black's last move. He can now develop his knight immediately, as 7 ♘xh4 ♘xd5 shouldn't trouble him.

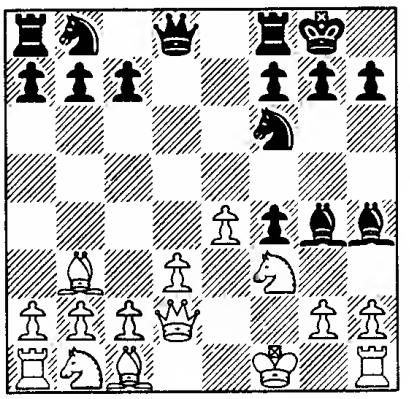
7 ♗b3

This retreat is possible as 7...♘xe4? 8 ♕e2 wins a piece. The alternative 7 ♗c4 is examined in the next game.

7...♗g4 8 d3 0-0

The best move. Three alternatives in descending order of inferiority are 8...♘xe4?? 9 ♕e2; 8...♘h5? 9 ♗xf7+ and 8...♘c6?! 9 ♗xf4.

9 ♕d2



9...♘h5!?

An important moment. By delaying ...♗xf3 for a move Black avoids the variation 9...♗xf3 10 gxf3 ♘h5 11 ♕g2! ♘c6 12 ♕g4 ♕g5 13 ♖g1 ♕xg4 14 fxg4!, which is good for White according to Gallagher. The question is, can White exploit this delay by playing 10 ♘xh4 to avoid ...♗xf3 next move? The answer seems to be 'No': 10 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 11 ♕f2 ♘g3+ 12 ♔e1 (12 ♔g1 ♘e2+ 13 ♔f1 ♕f6! is very good for Black) 12...♕h5 13 ♖g1 ♘e2 14 h3 and Black has the choice between 14...♘xg1 15 hxg4 ♕h1 16 ♕f1 ♕h4+ (not 16...f3 17 ♔f2!) 17 ♕f2 ♕h1 18 ♕f1 ♕h4+ with a draw by repetition and 14...♘xc1!? 15 hxg4 ♕a5+ 16 ♘c3 ♘xb3 17 cxb3, which looks better for Black.

10 ♘c3 ♘c6?

Now Black goes wrong. He had to play 10...♗xf3! 11 gxf3 ♘c6 12 ♕g2 (no better is 12 ♘d5, e.g. 12...♘d4 13

♘xf4? ♗g5) 12...♘d4 13 ♕g4? (after both 13 ♘e2 ♘xb3 14 axb3 f5 and 13 ♘d5 ♘xb3 14 axb3 f5 Black is slightly better) 13...g6 14 ♘d5 (14 ♗xf4? ♘xb3 15 axb3 f5 16 exf5 ♖xf5 is bad for White) 14...♘xb3 15 axb3 f5 and White is in trouble.

11 ♘xh4!

Now this move is perfectly possible, which means that the f4-pawn is very vulnerable.

11...♕xh4 12 ♕f2 ♕xf2+

Of course, 12...♘g3+? 13 ♔g1 just loses a piece now that e2 is defended by White's knight.

13 ♔xf2 ♘d4 14 ♘d5 ♘xb3

After this Black will have to wreck his kingside to defend f4. However, the attempt to mount a counterattack with 14...♔h8 15 ♘xf4 (not 15 ♘xc7? ♖ac8) 15...f5 fails after the simple 16 e5.

15 axb3 g5 16 g3 c6?

Black quickly falls apart after the game move. The best defensive chance was 16...fxg3+ 17 hxg3 f6!

17 ♘e7+ ♔h8 18 gxf4 f5? 19 h3 fxe4 20 hxg4 ♘xf4 21 ♘f5 1-0

Game 30

McDonald-Hector

Oviedo 1992

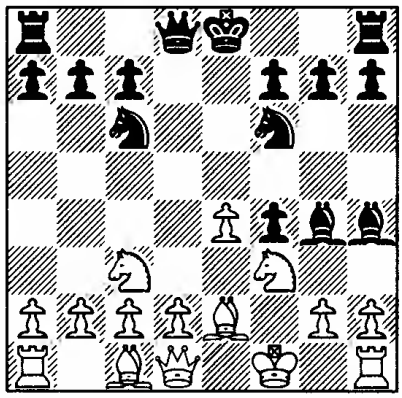
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♗c4 ♗h4+ 5 ♔f1 d5 6 ♗xd5 ♘f6 7 ♗c4!?

An alternative to 7 ♗b3 in the previous game.

7...♗g4 8 ♘c3 ♘c6 9 ♗e2

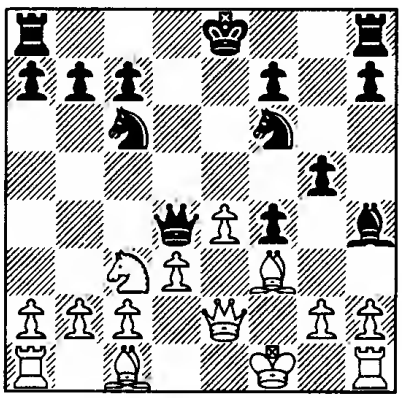
see following diagram

This is White's idea. He breaks the pin on the knight and thereby threatens 10 ♘xh4.



9...♗xf3 10 ♗xf3 ♕d4 11 ♕e2 0-0-0

This seems to lose. Black should try to mobilise his kingside pawns straightaway with 11...g5, when White replies 12 d3 and now:



a) If now 12...♖g8? 13 e5! ♘d7 (Black loses his queen after 13...♕xe5 14 ♗xc6+ or a piece after 13...♘xe5 14 ♘b5 ♕c5 15 d4) 14 g3 fxg3 15 hxg3 ♗xg3 16 e6 and Black's king seems to be in the most danger.

b) Instead 12...♘e5 is better here (or one move earlier with 11...♘e5, when 12 d3 g5 transposes). Then 13 g3! gives Black the choice of 13...fxg3 or 13...g4:

b1) 13...fxg3 14 hxg3 g4 (14...♗xg3 15 ♗xg5 is excellent for White in view

of his strong centre and the freedom his queen's bishop now enjoys) 15 ♗xg4 (not 15 ♗g2 ♘h5!) 15...♘fxg4 16 ♖xh4. White has a big positional advantage in addition to his extra pawn.

b2) 13...g4 14 ♗g2 (14 ♗xg4? ♘fxg4 15 gxh4 f3 would be bad for White) 14...f3. Now a strange situation has arisen in which both players have a bishop trapped. Play could continue 15 ♕f2 fxg2+ (of course this bishop couldn't run away, but it is difficult to see what else Black can do) 16 ♔xg2 ♕xf2+ 17 ♔xf2 and White picks up the bishop with a good game, unless Black plays 17...♘xe4+ 18 ♘xe4 ♗e7. However, White then has a very pleasant position after 19 ♗f4 in view of Black's weak kingside pawn structure.

12 d3 g5 13 g3! ♘e5 14 ♕g2!

Black's strategy is refuted by this quiet move, which creates a retreat square for the bishop on f3 and defends g3 a second time.

14...g4 15 ♗d1

This isn't normally a square that the bishop hopes to end up on in the King's Gambit. Nonetheless, White is glad that this retreat is available as he now wins a piece.

15...♘h5

Black has to stake everything on an attack as 15...f3 loses a piece after 16 ♕f2. Also inadequate is 15...♘xd3 after 16 cxd3 ♕xd3+ 17 ♗e2 f3 18 ♗xd3 fxg2+ 19 ♔xg2 ♖xd3 20 gxh4.

16 gxh4 ♖hg8 17 ♕f2 g3

The last gamble, but White now also picks up the knight on h5 and Black is hopelessly outgunned.

18 ♕xd4 g2+ 19 ♔g1 ♖xd4 20 ♗xh5 f3

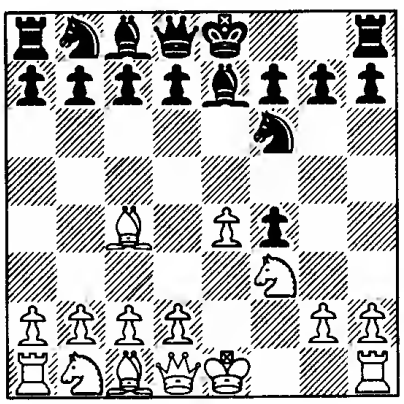
White has a rook trapped but two pieces is a lot of consolation.

21 ♗f4 ♘g4 22 ♗xg4+ ♖xg4 23 ♗g3 ♖b4 24 b3 ♖b6 25 ♘d5 gxh1♕+ 26 ♔xh1 ♖e6 27 ♘e3 ♖g8 28 ♖f1 b5 29 ♖xf3 ♖f8 30 ♖f5 ♖a6 31 ♖xb5 ♖xa2 32 ♖c5 1-0

A bizarre game.

Game 31
Belotti-Loncar
Mitropa Cup 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 4 ♗c4 ♘f6



Black spurns the check on h4, which is probably sensible in view of the analysis in Games 29 and 30. Instead he develops and looks to equalise with an immediate 5...d5. White therefore kicks the knight away.

5 e5 ♘g4

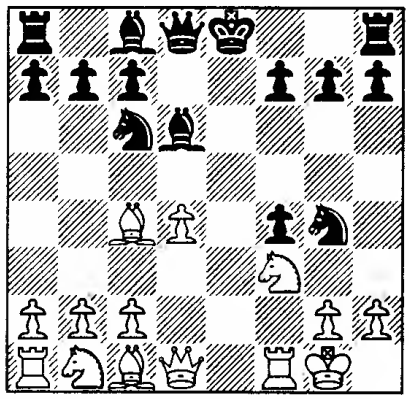
Less good is 5...♘h5 after which Estrin suggests that 6 ♘c3 d6 7 exd6 ♕xd6 8 d4 ♘c6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♗e2! ♗g4 11 ♘e4, planning 12 ♘f2, is awkward for Black.

6 0-0

White's other moves are 6 ♘c3 and 6 d4, which usually transpose into 6 0-0 lines. For example, 6 ♘c3 d6! 7 exd6 ♕xd6! 8 d4 0-0 9 0-0 ♕h6 transposes to the game. Or 6 d4 d5 and again we reach the game after 7 exd6 ♕xd6 8 ♘c3 0-0 9 0-0 ♕h6. Note that Black's correct response to 6 ♘c3 is 6...d6: if Black plays 6...d5 (the standard move against 6 0-0 and 6 d4) then he will get a rude shock when White replies 7 ♗xd5!

6...d5

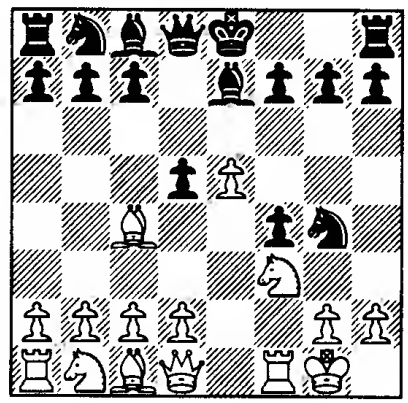
The main alternative was 6...♘c6 7 d4 d5 8 exd6 ♗xd6 and now:



a) The check 9 ♕e1+!? is awkward for Black. If 9...♕e7 then 10 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 11 ♘c3 ♗f5 12 ♘d5+, planning 13 c3, is slightly better for White in the endgame. Or if 9...♘e7 10 h3 ♘h6 11 ♘e5 g5 12 h4 f6 13 hxg5 fxg5 14 ♘f3 gives White the better chances according to Estrin and Glaskov. Indeed, Black's kingside looks pretty flimsy here. Finally, 9...♔f8 was played in Illescas-Fernandez, Las Palmas 1987, when White obtained a clear advantage after 10 ♘c3 ♗f5?! (it was better to play 10...g5, though Bhend suggests that 11 h3 ♘h6 12 ♘e4 ♗e7 13 d5 gives White the superior chances) 11 ♘h4!, hitting the bishop and planning an attack along the f-file after 12 ♗xf4 etc. Black tried 11...♕g5, but the endgame was miserable for him after 12 ♘xf5 ♕xf5 13 ♕e4! ♕xe4 14 ♘xe4.

Nevertheless, it may be that 9 ♕e1+ is not White's strongest move.

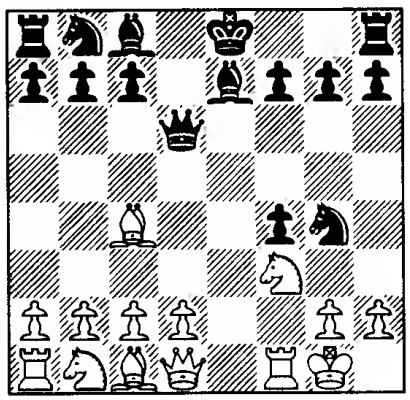
b) In Hebden-Malaniuk, Vrnjacka Banja 1991, White preferred 9 ♘c3 0-0 10 ♘e4! This improves on 10 ♘e2 ♘e3 11 ♗xe3 fxe3, when Black was slightly better in Keres-Alatortstev, USSR 1950. Hebden's move attacks the bishop on d6 and thereby undermines the f4-pawn. Black could find nothing better than to liquidate to a slightly worse endgame: 10...♘f6 11 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 12 c3 ♗g4 13 ♕d2! (this move is a Hebden speciality) 13...♘d5 14 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♕xf4 ♗xf3 16 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 17 ♖xf3. The bishop is much superior to a knight in this type of position, but Malaniuk's Russian technique succeeded in holding the balance after 17...♖ad8 18 ♗f4 ♖d7 19 ♖e1 ♘d8! 19 b3 ♘e6 etc.



7 exd6 ♕xd6!

This is much better than 7...♗xd6,

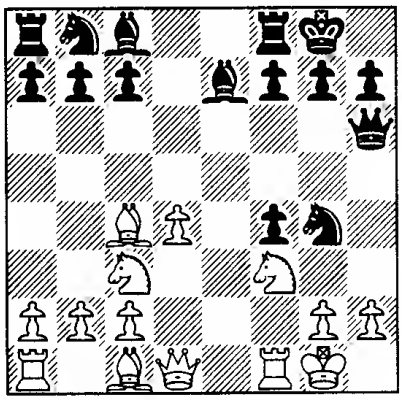
when in Gallagher-Reinhard, Eupen Open (rapidplay) 1995, White had a good endgame after 8 ♕e2+! ♕e7 9 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 10 d4 ♗f5 11 ♗b3. Black didn't put up much of a fight: 11...♘d7?! (11...♖e8 12 ♘c3 c6, preparing ...♔f8, was a better try) 12 ♘c3 c6 13 ♘g5 ♗g6 14 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 15 ♖xf4 f5? (a horrible move, but 15...♘gf6 16 ♖e1+ ♔f8 17 d5! is pretty awful, as Black is playing without his king's rook) 16 ♘e6 ♔d6 17 ♘xg7 ♖hf8 18 ♖e1 and Black soon resigned.



8 d4 0-0 9 ♘c3 ♕h6!

This is an important improvement on 9...c6? 10 h3 ♘e3 11 ♗xe3 fxe3 12 ♘e5 (as in Hebden-Fassert, Guernsey 1988) when if Black tries to defend f7 with 12...♗e6 then 13 ♘e4 chases the queen away from the defence of the bishop. Then after 13...♕d8 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 ♕g4 White has a winning attack. Another variation on this theme is 9...♘e3? 10 ♗xe3 fxe3 11 ♘b5! ♕d8 12 ♘e5 ♗f6 (if 12...♗e6 13 ♗xe6 fxe6 14 ♕g4) 13 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 14 ♕h5 and White's attack is decisive.

With 9...♕h6! Black wants to play ...♗e6 and be in a position to answer ♗xe6 with ...♕xe6, when his kingside remains solid. Hence he puts his queen on a square where it cannot be chased away by a white knight.



10 h3

This is not very promising, but the alternatives were no more enticing. For example, if 10 ♕e1 then 10...♗e6 looks good (11 d5? ♗c5+). Alternatively, White can try 10 ♘d5, but 10...♗d6 11 ♖e1 ♗e6 12 h3 c6!? 13 ♘b6 axb6 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 hxg4 ♕g6 is slightly better for Black according to Blatny.

10...♘e3 11 ♗xe3 fxe3 12 ♘e5?!

Blatny suggests that 12 ♘d5 is better, in order to regain the pawn with approximate equality after 12...♗d6 13 ♕d3 ♖e8 14 ♖ae1.

12...♗e6

All as planned (see the note to move nine). However, 12...♗f6, to answer 13 ♘d5 with 13...♗xe5 14 dxe5 ♗e6, may be even better (Shofman-Antoshin, Moscow 1953).

13 ♗xe6 ♕xe6

Compared to the variations examined at move nine, where Black had to answer ♗xe6 with ...f7xe6, Black's kingside is rock solid. This means that he can now start to undermine

White's centre, a process that begins on the next move.

14 ♕f3 c5! 15 ♕xb7 cxd4 16 ♘d5

After this Black's attack soon becomes overwhelming. White had to snatch the exchange with 16 ♕xa8, though 16...dxc3!? 17 ♘d3 ♘c6 18 ♕b7 ♖b8 19 ♕a6 e2 (Blatny) with ideas of 20...cxb2 and 20...♗h4 gives Black a strong initiative.

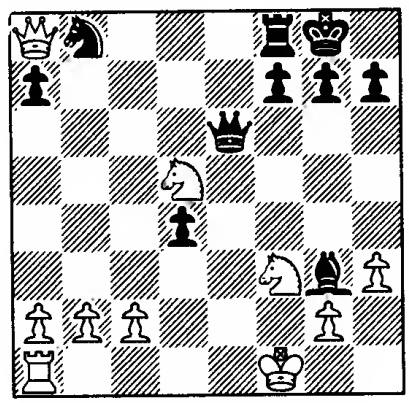
16...♗d6 17 ♘f3

17 ♕xa8 ♕xe5 18 ♘f4 g5! and wins.

17...e2 18 ♕xa8 exf1♕+ 19 ♔xf1

Blatny points out that 19 ♖xf1 ♘d7 20 ♕c6 ♘b6!! wins the knight, as 21 ♘xb6 is met by 21...♗h2+ (but not the immediate 20...♗h2+ because of 21 ♔xh2 ♕xc6 22 ♘e7+, and White has the last laugh).

19...♗g3!



20 ♕b7 ♖d8 21 c4 dxc3 22 ♘xc3 ♕e3! 23 ♘e4 ♕d3+ 0-1

After 24 ♔g1 ♕d1+! mates or wins material after 25 ♘e1 ♕xa1.

Summary

After 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7 White has an interesting choice between 4 ♘c3 and 4 ♗c4.

The assessment of the line 4 ♘c3 ♗h4+ depends on Black's piece sacrifice in the variation 5 ♔e2 d5 6 ♘xd5 ♘f6 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 d4 ♗g4 9 ♕d2! ♘c6 10 c3 g5 11 ♔d1 0-0-0 12 ♔c2 ♖he8!? 13 ♗d3 ♗xf3 14 gxf3 ♘xd4+ 15 cxd4 ♖xd4 in Game 28. If 16 a4 is good for White then it is difficult to see where Black's play can be improved earlier. If Black plays 4...♘f6 White has at least 5 d4 d5 6 ♗d3 dxe4 7 ♘xe4 with a slight advantage.

After 4 ♗c4 ♗h4+ 5 ♔f1 d5 6 ♗xd5 ♘f6 (Games 29 and 30) 7 ♗c4!? ♗g4 8 ♘c3 ♘c6 9 ♗e2 ♗xf3 10 ♗xf3 ♕d4 11 ♕e2 looks very good for White, so Black should prefer 4...♘f6 (Game 31).

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♗e7

4 ♘c3

4 ♗c4 *(D)*

4...♗h4+ 5 ♔f1 d5 6 ♗xd5 ♘f6 *(D)*

7 ♗b3 – Game 29

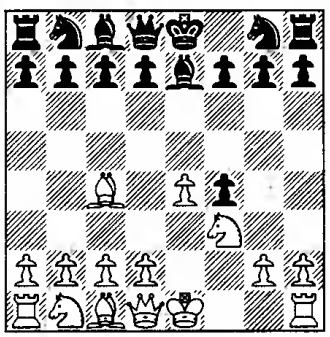
7 ♗c4 – Game 30

4...♘f6 – *Game 31*

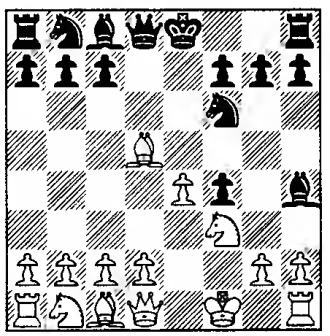
4...♗h4+ 5 ♔e2 d5 6 ♘xd5 ♘f6 7 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 d4 ♗g4 9 ♕d2 ♘c6 10 c3 *(D)* **g5**

10...0-0-0 – *Game 27*

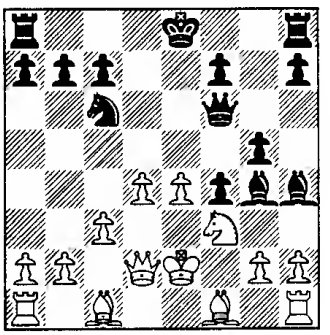
11 ♕xf4 – *Game 28*



4 ♗c4

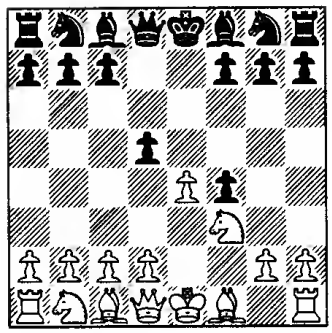


6...♘f6



10 c3

CHAPTER FIVE



Modern Defence (3 ♘f3 d5)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d5

The Modern Defence is a very solid approach by Black, based on Reuben Fine's maxim that the antidote to all gambits is ...d7-d5. After 2...exf4 3 ♘f3 d5 4 exd5 ♘f6, Black hopes to exchange White's d5-pawn for the f4-pawn. Then he should achieve a fluid and rapid development of his pieces, as White is deprived of disruptive pawn thrusts such as e4-e5. White has two distinct responses to Black's plan. First, he can play 5 ♗c4 (Games 32-33), allowing 5...♘xd5, when a quick ♗xd5 should give him a very small positional advantage as he can seize some space with d2-d4. Second, White can gamble with 5 ♗b5+ (Game 34). This crosses Black's plans and promises more winning chances, though at much greater risk. It's your choice!

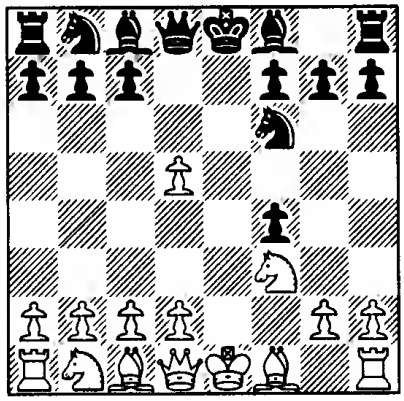
Game 32
Gallagher-Van der Sterren
San Bernardino 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d5 4 exd5 ♘f6

This is much better than 4...♕xd5, which loses time after 5 ♘c3. The knight will be well centralised on d5.

Black has experimented with 4...♗d6 here, but then the vigorous 5 d4 and 6 c4, seizing space in the centre, should give White a good game.

It should be mentioned that Black also has the option of transposing into other variations here. The Cunningham is reached after 4...♗e7 5 ♗c4 ♗h4+ 6 ♔f1 (see Chapter 4) while 4...c6 5 d4 ♗d6 6 ♘c3 is the Nimzowitsch Counter-Gambit (see Chapter 7).



5 ♗c4

The alternative 5 ♗b5+ is the subject of Game 34.

5...♘xd5

Two inferior alternatives for Black should be dismissed here. First, 5...♗d6?! allowed White to force a favourable endgame after 6 ♕e2+! ♕e7 7 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 8 d4 ♗f5 9 ♗b3, planning 10 c4, in Gallagher-Metzger, Lenk 1989. Second, 5...♘bd7 worked out badly for Black after 6 d4 ♘b6 7 ♗b5+ ♗d7 8 ♕e2+ in Gallagher-Ferretti, Chiasso 1991.

6 0-0

It is quite possible that 6 ♗xd5! is the correct move here, as the game continuation is unpromising for White. If White wants to play ♗xd5, it is best to do so before Black has played ...♗e6, so that Black is forced to recapture with his queen rather than with his bishop. However, assuming that Black avoids the tactical trap discussed below, it seems that White cannot hope for much advantage by giving up his powerful bishop. For a consideration of 6 ♗xd5, see the note to Black's seventh move.

6...♗e7

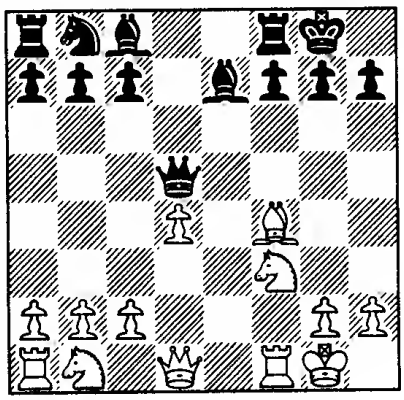
The alternative 6...♗e6 is examined in the next game.

7 d4 ♗e6

The main alternative is 7...0-0 with the standard continuation 8 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 9 ♗xf4

see following diagram

Gallagher relates how within the space of two years, two grandmasters and an international master all fell for the same trap against him by playing 9...c5? This is a very natural move which aims to liquidate White's centre. However, it can be refuted by a concrete tactical variation: 10 ♘c3 ♕c4 11 ♕e1! ♗f6 12 ♗d6 ♗xd4+ 13 ♔h1 ♖d8 14 ♘e4 f5?! 15 ♕h4! ♘c6 and now Gallagher uncorked 16 ♘e5!! If 16...♘xe5 17 ♕xd8+, while 16...♕d5 17 ♘xc6 ♖xd6 18 ♘e7+ wins the queen. In both Gallagher-Balashov, Lenk 1991, and Gallagher-Campora, Biel 1990, Black tried 16...♗xe5 but was hopelessly behind on material after 17 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 18 ♕xc4+ etc.



Suitably impressed, I tried to catch Lawrence Cooper with this trap at the British Championship in 1993. I decided to choose a move order which ruled out 6...♗e6 or 7...♗e6, so the game went 6 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 d4 0-0 9 ♗xf4, reaching the diagram position. Imagine my excitement as Black's hand reached for the c-pawn... However, Cooper had obviously read Gallagher's book, as he played 9...c6! After 10 ♘c3 ♕d8 White managed to build up a promising position, beginning with 11 ♕d3, but objectively I feel that chances should be equal with best play. Black has the bishop pair

and a solid pawn structure to balance White's space advantage. However, that is not quite the end of the story, as the alternative 11 ♕d2 was played in Gallagher-Hedke, Biel 1992, and White quickly obtained the advantage after some inferior play by Black: 11...♘d7?! (11...♗e6 looks safer) 12 d5!? ♘b6?! 13 d6 ♗f6 and White's passed pawn gives him a clear advantage. Here Gallagher tried 14 ♘e4, allowing 14...♗xb2. This seems needlessly speculative: the simple 14 b3, restraining the knight on b6 and planning ♖ad1 or ♖ae1 followed by ♘e4, c2-c4 etc., looks very strong for White.

Whether or not White has any real advantage after 9...c6, he should still give this line preference to that adopted in our illustrative game, in which Black achieves a good position. Therefore, White should aim to play ♗xd5 before Black's ...♗e6; probably 6 ♗xd5 is the most accurate moment, as in McDonald-Cooper in this note.

8 ♕e2

White wants to challenge the knight on d5, but first he must defend his bishop on c4.

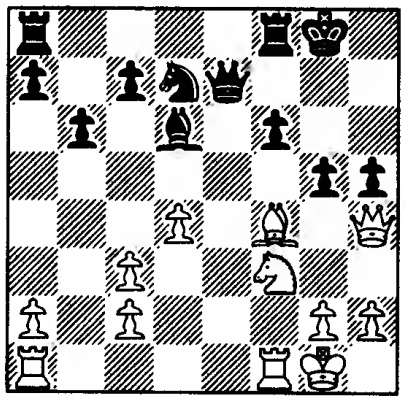
8...0-0 9 ♘c3 ♘xc3 10 bxc3 ♗xc4 11 ♕xc4 ♗d6 12 ♕b5 b6 13 ♘g5

'With a good game for White' according to Gallagher. However, Black's next move seems to refute this verdict.

13...♕e7! 14 ♕f5

The variation 14 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 15 ♖xf4 ♕e3+ 16 ♖f2 c5! 17 ♘f3 ♕xc3 is the reason that things look good for Black. White therefore tries to attack on the kingside, but his queen ends up being pushed around by Black's pawns. Eventually, White is forced into an inferior endgame.

14...g6 15 ♕g4 h5 16 ♕h4 f6 17 ♘f3 ♘d7 18 ♗xf4 g5!



19 ♗xd6 ♕e3+ 20 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 21 ♖xf2 cxd6

The endgame is clearly better for Black in view of the serious weakness of the c-pawns. However, Van der Sterren gets tricked.

22 ♘d2 ♖fe8 23 ♔f1 ♖ac8 24 c4 d5 25 cxd5 ♖xc2 26 ♖e2 ♔f8 27 a4 f5 28 ♖xe8+ ♔xe8 29 ♔e2 ♘f6?

The precise 29...♖c3! would have prevented the white king from advancing to d3. Hence the king would be unable to support the move ♘c4, which proves a vital part of White's strategy in the game continuation: the knight is brought to a strong centre square where it defends d6 and introduces the idea of ♘e5+. White would be left without a good plan, as the alternative 30 ♖f1 f4 31 ♘e4?? ♖e3+ would of course fail.

30 ♔d3 ♖c7 31 d6 ♖d7

As a result of the inaccuracy on move 29, Black's rook has been driven to a passive position and White's knight and rook have become active.

32 ♖e1+ ♔f8 33 ♘c4 ♔g7 34 ♖e5 ♔g6 35 a5 g4?

Overlooking a tactic. The correct path was 35...bxa5 36 ♖xa5 ♖b7.

36 ♖b5!

Threatening 37 ♘e5+ and therefore winning the b-pawn. Now Black, presumably in time pressure, collapses completely.

36...♖d8?

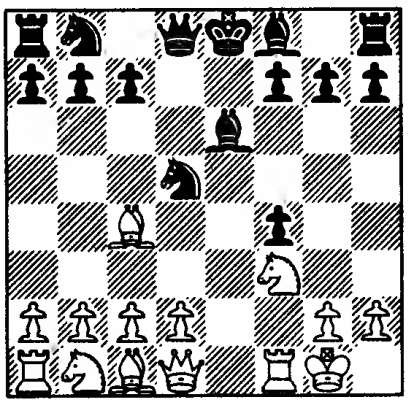
The best chance was 36...♔g5.

37 axb6 axb6 38 ♘e5+ ♔g7 39 ♖xb6 ♘d5 40 ♖b7+ ♔f6 41 ♘f7 ♖f8 42 d7 ♘f4+ 43 ♔c4 ♘e6 44 d5 1-0

A pretty finish.

Game 33
Hector-Ziatdinov
Antwerp 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d5 4 exd5 ♘f6 5 ♗c4 ♘xd5 6 0-0 ♗e6



This is the main alternative to 6...♗e7. If now 7 d4?? – a highly natural move! – 7...♘e3 8 ♗xe3 ♗xc4 wins the exchange.

7 ♗b3 ♗e7

Two other moves should be considered:

a) 7...♘c6 8 d4 ♘e3 9 ♗xe3 ♗xb3 was played in Gallagher-Murey, Metz 1990. Now instead of 10 ♗xf4 ♗e6 11 ♘c3, which led to a draw, 10 axb3 fxe3 11 ♖e1 seems preferable, e.g. 11...♗e7 12 ♖xe3 0-0 13 c3 with a superior pawn structure for White.

b) 7...c5 is an idea of the English player Gavin Wall. The best response may be 8 ♘c3, when both 8...♘xc3 9 dxc3, intending 10 ♗xf4, and 8...♘c6 9 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 10 d3 should favour White. So the critical move is 8...♗e7. However, 9 ♕e2 ♘c6 (9...0-0 drops a piece) 10 ♕e4!? may be good for White.

8 c4!

It seems that White is committed to entering a complex sacrificial line if he wishes to fight for the initiative.

In McDonald-Weill, Douai 1992, I tried to prove that 8 d4 was good, and found my opponent to be in a co-operative mood: 8...0-0 9 c4 ♘e3! (this is the reason that c2-c4 is usually played before d2-d4) 10 ♗xe3 fxe3 11 ♘c3 f5? 12 c5! ♕c8 13 ♘d5 ♗xd5 14 ♗xd5+ ♔h8 15 ♘e5 ♗f6 16 ♕f3 c6? 17 ♘g6+ 1-0. Black should have played 11...♗g4!?, which looks annoying as 12 ♕d3 can be answered by 12...♘c6. For my part, perhaps 9 ♖e1 was better, maintaining the tension and keeping c2-c4 in reserve. Possibly White would even dispense with c2-c4 and prefer c2-c3 to defend the d4-pawn.

8...♘b6 9 d4!

This gambit line is the only way to set Black problems.

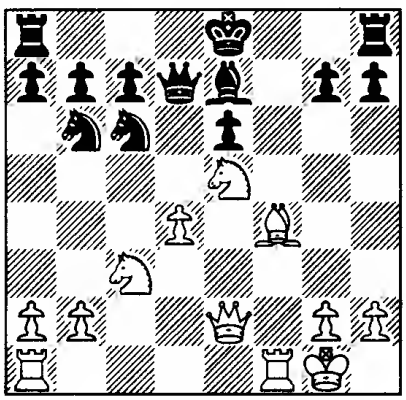
9...♘xc4

If Black declines the offer, e.g. with 9...0-0, then White has some advantage after 10 d5 and 11 ♗xf4.

10 ♗xf4 c6?!

In Hebden-Geller, Moscow 1986, Black was soon in trouble after 10...0-0 11 ♕e2 b5 12 ♘c3 a6 13 a4! as his queenside was collapsing. Black therefore delays castling and spends a move bolstering his centre and queenside immediately. However, the game continuation indicates that Black is taking a fatal risk with his king's safety.

The critical move is 10...♘b6, retreating the knight. Then after 11 ♗xe6 fxe6 12 ♕e2 ♘c6 13 ♘c3 ♕d7 14 ♘e5 an important position is reached.



a) 14...♘xd4? 15 ♕h5+ g6 16 ♘xg6 looks decisive.

b) 14...♕xd4+ 15 ♔h1 ♘xe5 16 ♗xe5 ♕c4 17 ♕h5+ g6 18 ♕h3 ♖f8 19 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 20 ♕xh7 0-0-0 21 ♗f6 ♖d7 (or 21...♖e8 22 ♕xg6 with advantage to White) 22 ♕xg6 or 22 ♕g8 looks awkward for Black.

c) 14...♘xe5 (Gallagher gives this move as dubious, but doesn't suggest what Black should play instead) 15 ♗xe5 ♗d6 and now:

c1) 16 ♗xd6?! cxd6 17 ♖ae1 ♖f8 18 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 19 ♕xe6 ♕xe6 20 ♖xe6 ♖d8 21 ♘e4 and a draw was agreed in the game Bangiev-Flomin, Correspondence 1986-87.

c2) 16 d5 is recommended by Bangiev as being very strong. However, after 16...♗c5+ 17 ♔h1 0-0-0 18 dxe6 ♕xe6 19 ♘b5 ♖he8 20 ♖fe1 ♘d7 (rather than Bangiev's suggested 20...♘d5) things look awkward for White, e.g. 21 ♕c2 ♕b6 22 ♗xc7 ♕xb5 23 ♗xd8 ♖xd8.

c3) 16 ♘b5! ♘d5?! (perhaps the best move is 16...♗xe5, when Black should be able to survive after 17 ♕h5+!? g6 18 ♕xe5 0-0-0, e.g. 19 ♘xc7 ♕xd4+ 20 ♕xd4 ♖xd4 21 ♘xe6 ♖c4) 17 ♗xd6 cxd6 18 ♖ae1 is given by both Bangiev and Gallagher as a small advantage for White. In fact, Black seems to be losing, as 18...0-0-0 loses the d-pawn as well as the e-pawn after 19 ♕xe6 ♕xe6 20 ♖xe6. Holding on to e6 with 18...♔e7 looks ghastly after 19 ♕g4 etc.

Black should therefore try the alternative mentioned at move 16 in note c3), or more sensibly, give the whole 6...♗e6 line a miss.

11 ♕e2 b5 12 a4 a6 13 axb5 cxb5 14 ♘c3 ♘c6 15 ♖ad1 ♗d5

Stopping the d-pawn in its tracks. Black only needs one more move – castles – and his opening will have been a complete success. Unfortunately for him, he is swept away by a wave of tactics before he can find time for this vital move.

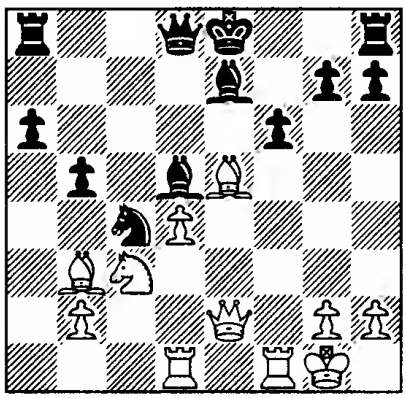
16 ♘e5! ♘6xe5

The natural 16...0-0 loses a piece after 17 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 18 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 19 ♕xe7.

17 ♗xe5 f6

At first glance it seems that Black

can escape the worst with 17...0-0, as 18 ♗xg7? ♔xg7 19 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 20 ♕xe7 ♕e6 isn't so clear. However, White has the insidious move 18 ♗c7!!, when Black loses a piece after 18...♕xc7 19 ♘xd5 etc.



18 ♖xf6!

This is delightful butchery, but 18 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 19 ♖xf6 was a better move order, e.g. 19...gxf6 20 ♗xf6 ♖a7 21 ♗xh8 and White is material up with a strong attack.

18...♘xe5

Fritz, with the defensive sangfroid of a computer, suggests the brilliant defence 18...gxf6 19 ♗xf6 ♗f3!! Black deals with the double threat of 20 ♘xd5 and 20 ♗xh8 by buying time to move the rook to safety. After 20 gxf3 ♖g8+ 21 ♔h1 ♖a7! Black can battle on, though he is still worse. Of course, there was little chance of the beleaguered Ziatdinov finding such a variation over the board.

19 ♘xd5 gxf6 20 dxe5 ♔f8 21 ♔h1!

A quiet interlude in the middle of a raging attack. Black is defenceless, so White takes a move to tuck his king away in the corner.

21...♖c8 22 ♘xf6 ♕a5 23 ♕h5 ♖c4 24 ♕e8+ 1-0

A brilliant attacking game.

Game 34
Westerinen-Korneev
Zaragoza 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 exf4 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♗b5+

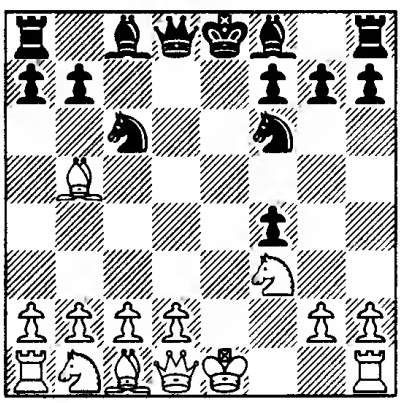
White crosses Black's plan of recapturing on d5 with the knight.

5...c6

It is logical to dissolve the d5-pawn, as otherwise White will support it with c2-c4 and obtain the ascendancy in the centre.

6 dxc6 ♘xc6

The alternative is 6...bxc6, when 7 ♗c4 ♘d5 8 0-0 ♗d6 9 ♘c3 ♗e6 10 ♘e4 ♗e7 11 ♗b3 0-0 12 d4 ♘d7 13 ♕e2, planning 14 c4, proved good for White in Spassky-Sakharov, Leningrad 1960.

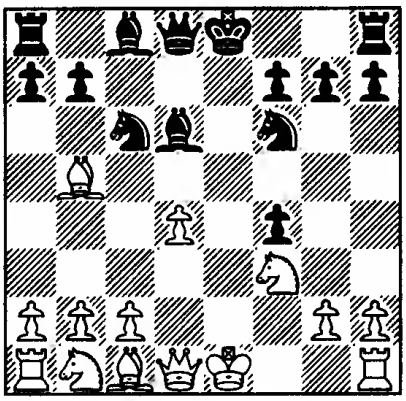


7 d4 ♗d6

A tricky alternative is 7...♕a5+!? 8 ♘c3 ♗b4. In Belotti-Dutreeuw, Asti 1995, Black obtained the advantage after 9 ♕e2+ ♗e6 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♕d3 ♗d6, as the white bishop proved misplaced on b5. Here the exchange 12

♗xc6 bxc6 would not solve White's problems: it strengthens Black on the light squares by increasing his hold on d5 and concedes the bishop pair.

Instead of 9 ♕e2+, Gallagher gives 9 0-0 ♗xc3 (maybe 9...0-0 is okay) 10 ♕e2+ ♗e6 11 bxc3 as clearly better for White. However, after 11...♕xc3 12 ♗xf4 0-0 matters are far from clear: White has the initiative and the two bishops, but on the other hand his queenside is weak and the d-pawn is hanging. Black, meanwhile, has every piece well entrenched.



8 ♕e2+

This is the most ambitious move. A less risky alternative is 8 0-0, when play normally continues 8...0-0 9 ♘bd2 (instead of this, Gallagher suggests that 9 c4 deserves attention) 9...♗g4 10 ♘c4 and now:

a) 10...♗xf3 was played in Renet-Van der Sterren, Budel 1987, when White avoided some complications to emerge with the better endgame after 11 ♖xf3 ♗c5 12 ♗xc6 (12 c3 ♘xd4!? 13 cxd4 ♕xd4+ 14 ♕xd4 ♗xd4+ 15 ♔f1 a6 16 ♗a4 b5 17 ♖xf4 looks unclear) 12...♕xd4+ 13 ♕xd4 ♗xd4+ 14 ♔h1 bxc6 15 ♗xf4 and Black's queenside pawns are slightly weak.

b) 10...♗c7 11 c3 ♘e7 12 ♗a4 b5!? 13 ♗xb5 ♕d5 14 ♘a3 ♕h5 and Black had attacking chances for the pawn in Kinlay-Nunn, New Malden 1977.

8...♗e6 9 ♘g5

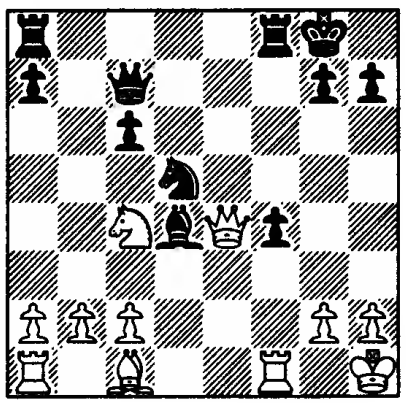
The consistent move. The other aggressive try is 9 ♘e5, but this worked out badly in Hartston-Spassky, Hastings 1965/66, after 9...0-0 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♗xf4 ♘d5 12 ♗g3 f6 13 ♘f3 ♗xg3+ 14 hxg3 ♖e8 15 ♔f2 (this looks horrible, but 15 0-0 ♕b8!?, hitting both b2 and g3, would have been very unpleasant) 14...♗f5 16 ♕c4 ♔h8 17 ♘c3 ♘e3 18 ♕c5 ♘g4+ 19 ♔g1 ♕d7 and Black's build-up quickly became overpowering.

9...0-0 10 ♘xe6 fxe6 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 0-0

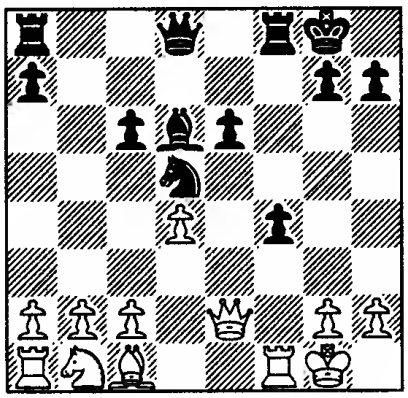
Not 12 ♕xe6+?! ♔h8 13 0-0 f3! with an all-out attack on White's king, while White's queenside is asleep.

12...♘d5!?

Instead 12...♕c7 leads to a critical position after 13 ♘d2 e5! 14 dxe5 (14 ♘c4 e4 15 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 16 ♗xf4 ♕xd4+ is good for Black, as the pawn on b2 drops) 14...♗xe5 15 ♘c4 ♗d4+ 16 ♔h1 ♘d5 17 ♕e4.



Glaskov claims that White is better here in view of the structural weaknesses in Black's position. However, Gallagher continues 17...♗c5 and suggests that Black has enough activity to compensate for the weaknesses. I must admit that I would prefer to be Black here. The f-pawn has a strong cramping influence on White's position. Black will be the first to get a rook to the open e-file, and the e3-square could become a strong outpost for a knight or bishop.



13 ♕xe6+!

According to established theory Black's last move is bad because of 13 c4, attacking the knight. So what had Korneev prepared? We shall investigate:

a) The immediate 13...♕h4? loses after 14 ♕xe6+ ♖f7 15 ♕xd6.

b) 13...f3 is interesting, e.g. 14 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 15 cxd5 f2+ 16 ♔h1 ♖e8 17 ♕g4 ♖e1 18 ♘d2 cxd5 19 b3 ♕a5 when White has an extra piece but is tied up. Nevertheless, I don't trust this for Black.

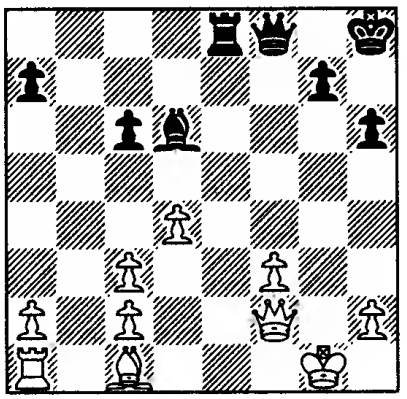
c) 13...♘e3! 14 ♗xe3 fxe3 15 ♖xf8+ (it seems best to deflect the black queen from the d8-h4 diagonal) 15...♕xf8 16 ♕xe3 e5! 17 ♘c3 (not 17 dxe5? ♗c5) 17...exd4 18 ♕e6+ ♔h8 19 ♘e4 ♗f4 20 ♕xc6 ♖e8 and Black has dangerous play for the pawn.

Therefore, it seems that White made the correct choice in the game.

13...♔h8 14 ♘c3 ♘xc3 15 bxc3 f3

This is the only way to maintain the initiative.

16 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 17 gxf3 ♕f8 18 ♕e2 ♖e8 19 ♕f2 h6



A good moment to take stock. White is two pawns up, which is a serious material advantage. However, his kingside is fragile and the bishop on c1 has no effective squares. If White is to achieve a safe and promising game he has to turn the inert clump of pawns in the centre into a fighting force.

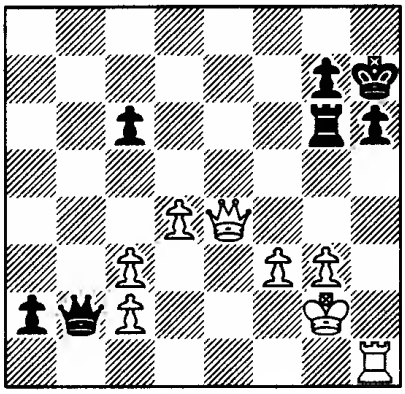
20 ♗d2 ♖e6 21 ♖e1?

A feeble move. White should seize the initiative with 21 c4, when after 21...♖f6 22 ♖f1 ♕f7 23 d5! cxd5 24 c5 etc. he has some advantage.

21...♖f6 22 ♖f1 ♕f7 23 ♕e2

This allows Black an outside passed pawn and good winning chances. It was better to play 23 a4, e.g. 23...♕g6+ 24 ♔h1 ♕xc2 25 a5.

23...♕xa2 24 ♕e4 a5 25 ♔h1 a4 26 ♗e1 a3 27 ♗g3 ♗xg3 28 hxg3 ♕b2 29 ♕e8+ ♔h7 30 ♕e4+ ♔h8 31 ♕e8+ ♔h7 32 ♕e4+ ♖g6 33 ♔g2 a2 34 ♖h1!!



Just when the game seems to be over, White discovers an amazing defensive resource. If now 34...a1♕ then 35 ♖xh6+! gxh6 (not 35...♔xh6?? 36 ♕h4 mate) 36 ♕e7+ ♖g7 37 ♕e4+ ♔h8 38 ♕e8+ etc. and Black cannot escape perpetual check.

34...♕a3 35 ♖a1 ♕b2 36 ♖h1 ♕b8!

Black finds the best winning attempt, attacking the g3-pawn and forcing White to advance his g-pawn.

37 g4 ♕b2

Back again, and this time really threatening to queen, as 38 ♖xh6+ can be answered by 38...♔xh6, when there is no 39 ♕h4 mate - the g-pawn is in the way.

38 ♕e1?

White collapses under the pressure. He had to continue to counter Black's threat to queen with further ideas of perpetual check. Two moves suggest themselves. First, 38 g5! when if 38...a1♕ 39 ♖xh6+ gxh6 40 ♕e7+ forces perpetual as before. Black could try 38...♕b5 instead of queening, but then 39 f4 ♕d5 40 ♔f3 should be okay for White.

Alternatively, 38 ♕f5! would step beyond the obstructing g-pawn and reintroduce the idea of 38...a1♕ 39 ♖xh6+ ♔xh6? 40 ♕h5 mate. So Black would have to make do with a draw with 39...gxh6 40 ♕f7+ ♖g7 41 ♕f5+ ♔g8 42 ♕c8+ ♔f7 43 ♕d7+ and the only end to the checks is with 43...♔g6?? 44 ♕f5 checkmate.

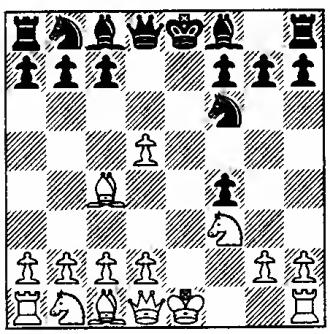
38...♕xc2+ 39 ♔g3 ♕b3 40 ♕a1 ♖e6 41 ♖h2 ♕b8+ 42 ♔h3 ♕f4 43 ♖f2 ♖e2! 0-1

A nice touch. After 44 ♖xe2 ♕xf3+ Black regains the rook and then puts his queen on b1 to force the win.

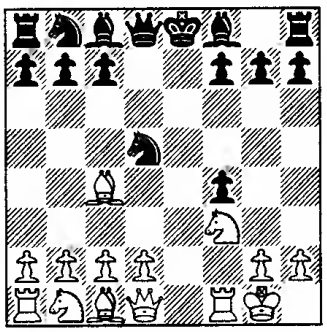
Summary
After 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d5 4 exd5 ♘f6 White has to make a choice between 5 ♗c4 and 5 ♗b5+. If White opts for 5 ♗c4 ♘xd5 he should now play 6 ♗xd5! (see the notes to move seven, Game 32) with chances for a very slight edge after 6...♕xd5 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 d4 0-0 9 ♗xf4 c6 (but not 9...c5?) 10 ♘c3 ♕d8 11 ♕d2 etc. On the other hand, 5 ♗b5+ c6 6 dxc6 ♘xc6 7 d4 is completely unclear (Game 34).

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 d5 4 exd5 ♘f6

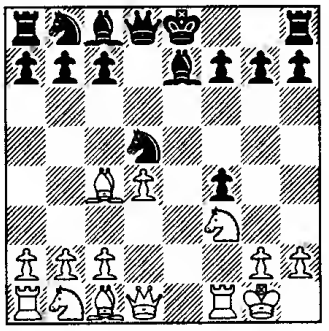
5 ♗c4 *(D)*
5 ♗b5+ – *Game 34*
5...♘xd5 6 0-0 *(D)* **♗e7**
6...♗e6 – *Game 33*
7 d4 *(D)* – *Game 32*



5 ♗c4

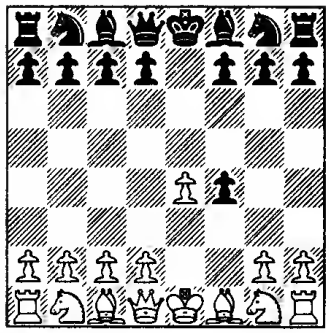


6 0-0



7 d4

CHAPTER SIX



Bishop and Mason Gambits (3 ♗c4 and 3 ♘c3)

After
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4

White has two other plausible ways to play instead of 3 ♘f3: the Bishop's Gambit 3 ♗c4 and the Mason Gambit 3 ♘c3.

The Bishop's Gambit (3 ♗c4)

The King's Bishop's Gambit has long been unfashionable. Ordinary club players are probably frightened off by the queen check at h4, which certainly looks powerful at first glance. International players, on the other hand, are discouraged by the ease with which Black can achieve ...d7-d5, exploiting the position of the bishop on c4 to gain time to open up the centre.

And yet several points can be raised in favour of the Bishop's Gambit. First, in the King's (Knight's) Gambit 3 ♘f3, the bishop almost always goes to c4 at some point, so why not play it there immediately? Second, by delaying ♘f3 White takes the sting out of Black's pawn advance ...g7-g5 and ...g5-g4, since it no longer attacks a knight. And thirdly, in several variations of the King's Knight's Gambit, White has to be ready to give up castling in any case, so why should he be particularly afraid of 3...♕h4+?

If the reader remains sceptical about the merits of 3 ♗c4, remember that the great Bobby Fischer 'refuted' the King's (Knight's) Gambit (see Chapter 1), but nevertheless persevered with 3 ♗c4 himself. For Bronstein's view on the Bishop's Gambit, see the Introduction to this book.

Here we shall concentrate on the modern approach to defending the Bishop's Gambit, which involves 3...c6 4 ♘c3 ♘f6 or the equivalent 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6. White then has the choice of 5 ♗b3, as played by Short in Game 35, or the enterprising but risky 5 d4 (Games 36 and 37). One move earlier, Piket's 3...c6 4 ♘c3 d5 looks dangerous, but Ivanchuk succeeds in drawing its fangs in Game 38. Mention should also be made of 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 ♗b4!?, a little-known but promising idea for Black, which is examined

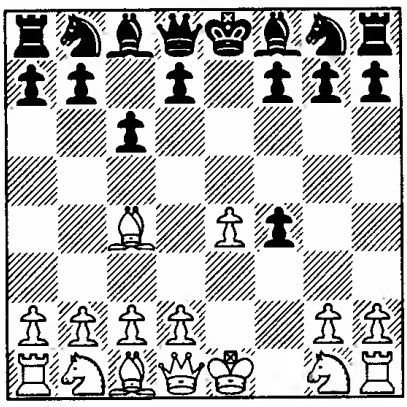
in the notes to Game 36. Various other ideas for the attack and defence are considered in the notes to Game 35.

The Mason Gambit (3 ♘c3) and other Third Moves

'I can only conclude that White is just asking for it in this variation,' wrote Joe Gallagher in *Trends in the King's Gambit*. Nevertheless, the Mason Gambit (Games 39 and 40) has the element of surprise, and may catch out an opponent accustomed to rattling off 20 moves of a Spanish (Ruy Lopez). For example, in Game 39 Spassky's enterprising opening proves too much for his solid, bookish opponent. However, as far as I can tell Spassky never dared to repeat the Mason Gambit experience. Once in a lifetime is enough. Two other third moves for White are briefly considered in the notes to Game 39.

Game 35
Short-P.Nikolic
Wijk aan Zee 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗c4 c6



Instead 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6 would transpose. This is the way that Games 36 and 37 actually begin.

Here we shall consider some of Black's other possibilities:

a) 3...d5 is often recommended as an easy way to equalise after 4 ♗xd5 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♗b4 6 ♘f3 ♗xc3 7 dxc3 c6 8 ♗c4 ♕xd1+ 9 ♔xd1 0-0 10 ♗xf4 ♘xe4 11 ♖e1. However, I agree with Berry that White's two bishops and advantage in development should give him some edge. If White wishes he can even avoid this variation with 4 exd5. Then 4...♘f6 5 ♘c3 c6 6 d4 cxd5 7 ♗b3 would transpose to our main game here. Alternatively, White can try 7 ♗b5+ ♘c6 8 ♗xf4 ♗d6 9 ♘ge2, as in Bronstein-Tseshkovsky, USSR 1978, though Bronstein claims that Black can equalise after 9...♗xf4 10 ♘xf4 0-0 11 0-0 ♕b6 etc.

b) 3...♕h4+ (that scary queen check!) 4 ♔f1 d5 (instead 4...d6 5 ♘c3 ♗e6 6 ♕e2 c6 7 ♘f3 ♕e7 8 d4 ♗xc4 9 ♕xc4 g5 was played in Fischer-Evans, USA Championship 1963/64, and now Keres recommends 10 h4! g4 11 ♘e1 with some advantage to White) 5 ♗xd5 (Andrew Martin has championed the move 5 exd5!?, claiming that White has a clear advantage after 5...♗d6 6 ♘c3 ♘e7 7 ♘e4 0-0 8 d4 ♘d7 [8...♘f5 looks better] 9 ♘xd6 cxd6 10 ♗b3. White has the two bishops and can expand with c2-c4) 5...♗d6! 6 ♘c3 ♘e7 7 d4 f6 (this rules out 8 e5 and prepares a kingside offensive that would justify the position of the queen on h5) 8 ♘f3 ♕h5 9 ♕e1 ♘bc6 10 ♘e2 g5 11 c4 with an unclear position according to Estrin and Glas-

kov, though 11...g4 looks strong for Black.

c) 3...♘c6!? is annoying for White, as the natural response 4 ♘f3 transposes to the Hanstein Variation of the King's (Knight) Gambit after 4...g5 5 d4 (bad is 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g5 ♘e5! 7 ♗b3 h6 8 d4 hxg5 9 dxe5 ♗g7, as in Mieses-Chigorin, Vienna 1903) 5...♗g7 6 c3 d6 7 0-0 h6. As was seen in Chapter 3, this seems favourable for Black. Berry, in an article in *Chess Monthly*, has suggested 7 ♕b3 as an interesting way to avoid the transposition. He then gives the sacrificial continuation 7...♕e7 8 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8? 10 0-0 ♘a5 11 ♕a4 ♔xf7 12 ♗xf4 ♕h5 13 ♗xd6+ ♘f6 14 ♗xc7. White will recover a piece with 15 e5 or 15 ♗xa5, after which he will have a couple of pawns and attacking chances for one piece. Even the Fritz computer, which is usually contemptuous of sacrifices, thinks that White is better here.

However, it seems that Black's play in the above variation can be greatly improved with 9...♔d8! Then 10 ♗xg8 loses after 10...♕xg2 11 ♖f1 ♕xe4+, when going to the d-file leads to mate, e.g. 12 ♔d2 ♕e3+ 13 ♔d1 ♗g4+ 14 ♔c2 ♕e4+! 15 ♔d2 ♕e2, while if 12 ♔f2 then 12...♘xd4! is crushing. The consistent reply is 10 0-0, planning 11 ♗xf4. This also seems bad, as after 10...♗h3 11 ♖f2 ♘xd4! 12 cxd4?! (White has to try 12 ♕xb7, but then 12...♖c8 looks better for Black as 13 cxd4 ♗xd4 is still very bad for White and 13 ♗xf4 fails to 13...♘f3+!) 12...♗xd4 13 ♕xh3 ♗xf2+ 14 ♔xf2 ♕c5+! Black picks up the bishop on c1 and wins. Finally, it should be mentioned that after 4 ♘f3 g5 5 d4 ♗g7 White can also try 6 ♘c3 (rather than 6 c3) when 6...d6 7 ♘d5, as in the game Pillsbury-Schlechter, Vienna 1903, is interesting.

Assuming that White has no wish to transpose to the Hanstein, then 4 d4 should be investigated. Korchnoi gives the sharp variation 4...♘f6 5 e5 d5 6 ♗b3 ♘e4 7 ♗xf4 ♕h4+ 8 g3 ♘xg3 9 ♗xg3 ♕e4+ 10 ♔f2 ♕xh1 11 ♘c3. Now he believes that the black queen is doomed, e.g. 11...♘e7 12 ♕e2 h5 13 ♖e1 h4 14 ♗f4 ♘g6 (14...h3 15 ♘xh3 ♕xe1+ 16 ♔xe1 ♖xh3 17 ♘xd5 looks good for White) 15 ♔e3 ♘xf4 16 ♔xf4 and after 16...g6 17 ♘f3 ♗h6+ 18 ♘g5 ♗xg5+ 19 ♔xg5 ♖h5+ 20 ♔f4 White wins. However, Berry (quoted from an article by Tim Wall in the *British Chess Magazine*) claims that Black is better after the improvement 16...g5+! 17 ♔e3 (not 17 ♔xg5 ♗h6+ 18 ♔f6 ♖g8) 17...g4. This seems correct, e.g. if White tries to trap the queen with 18 ♗xd5 then there follows 18...♗h6+ 19 ♔d3 ♗f5+ 20 ♔c4 ♗e6! 21 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 22 ♗xh1 0-0-0 and although White has a nice pawn centre, Black's extra exchange and the two bishops give him winning chances. Perhaps 18 ♘xd5 is best, e.g. 18...♗h6+ 19 ♔d3 ♗f5+ 20 ♔c3 and if Black castles either way he loses the bishop on f5 to a fork. Nevertheless, Black would be undoubtedly better. Therefore 3...♘c6 seems a good try.

As Wall remarks, some practical tests are required before a final verdict can be reached on the obscure variations examined above.

4 ♘c3

In T.Wall-Ferguson, Rotherham 1997, White tried 4 ♕e2. That game went 4...♗e7 5 ♘f3 d5 6 exd5 and White emerged with the better chances after 6...cxd5 7 ♗b5+ ♘c6 8 d4 ♘f6 9 ♗xf4. Instead Wall recommends 6...♘f6 7 0-0 0-0 8 dxc6 ♘xc6 9 c3 ♗g4 10 d4 ♗d6, when White's fourth move is looking a bit silly.

4...♘f6

This position is more often reached through the move order 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6.

5 ♗b3

The more risky 5 d4 is the subject of Games 36 and 37, after the transposition mentioned in the last note.

5...d5 6 exd5 cxd5 7 d4 ♗d6

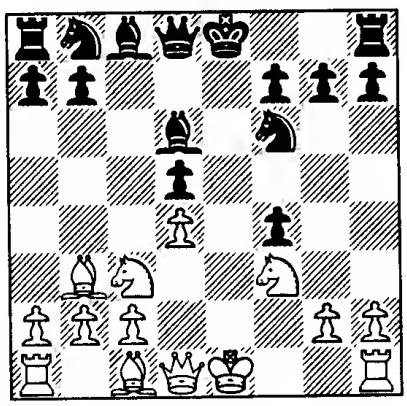
The more double-edged 7...♗b4 was played in Morozevich-Anand, Moscow (rapidplay) 1995. That game continued 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 0-0 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 ♕c7 11 ♕e1 ♘c6 12 ♕h4? (better is 12 ♘e5! ♖e8 13 ♗xf4 with unclear play – Wall) 7...♘e7 13 ♗xf4 ♕xc3 14 ♗d2 ♕c7 15 ♘e5 ♘f5 16 ♕f4 ♗e6, when Black has kept his extra pawn and should win.

8 ♘f3

A critical moment. The old move is 8 ♘ge2, planning to regain the pawn on f4. Then Spielmann-Bogolyubov, Marisch-Ostrau 1923, continued 8...0-0 9 0-0 g5! 10 ♘xd5 ♘c6 11 c3 ♘xd5 12 ♗xd5 ♘e7 13 ♗e4 f5 with advantage to Black.

However, this is not the end of the story. Fischer analysed this variation in the American magazine *Chess Life* (April 1964) and concluded that after 8...0-0 White can snatch the pawn back immediately with 9 ♗xf4. Then some subtle play beats off the black attack: 9...♗xf4 10 ♘xf4 ♖e8+ 11 ♘fe2 ♘g4 12 ♘xd5! ♗e6 13 h3! ♗xd5 14 hxg4 ♗xg2 15 ♖h2 ♗f3 16 ♕d3 ♖xe2+ 17 ♖xe2 ♗xe2 18 ♕xe2 and White stands better. This verdict was confirmed in a couple of correspondence games by the King's Gambit expert Steve Berry, one of which continued 18...♕h4+ 19 ♕f2! ♕xf2+ (there is nothing better since f7 is attacked twice) 20 ♔xf2 with the better endgame for White in Berry-Day, Correspondence 1974.

Berry believes that both 12...♘h6 or 13...♘c6 could be improvements for Black, but neither of these seem particularly impressive, e.g. a possible line after 13...♘h6 is 14 ♘df4 ♗xb3 15 axb3 ♕h4+ 16 ♔d2 (not 16 g3 ♕xg3+) 16...♘c6 17 c3. Or if 12...♘c6, 13 0-0 may be a good answer (13...♗e6 14 ♘ef4). Fischer was famously accurate as an analyst, so it is difficult to disagree with him!



8...♘c6 9 0-0 ♗e6 10 ♘g5 h6

This weakens the kingside. The simple 10...0-0 was better, or perhaps 10...♖c8, threatening 11...♘xd4. In either case Black would have had a

sound position, though White would have some advantage in view of the two bishops after 11 ♘xe6.

11 ♘xe6 fxe6 12 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 13 ♖xf4 0-0

The immediate 13...♕d6 was better, interfering with the smooth development of White's game. Then after 14 ♕d2 0-0 15 ♖af1 the white queen would be on a less threatening square than in the game. The sacrifice 14 ♖xf6 would be unsound.

14 ♕d3 ♕d6 15 ♖af1

White completes the mobilisation of his pieces. He has the advantage in view of the weaknesses in Black's pawn structure, in particular the backward pawn on e6 and the hole on e5. Furthermore, if he can bring his bishop on b3 into active play then it will prove the best minor piece.

15...♘h7?

Black wants to lessen White's pressure on the kingside and therefore correctly offers the exchange of rooks. However, the move chosen decentralises the knight and, as will be seen, is the prelude to an incorrect plan. He should play 15...♘d7, keeping the knight in the centre and keeping watch over the e5-square.

16 ♘e2!

White defends his rook and clears the way for 17 c3 and 18 ♗c2, with a winning attack. Black's reply is therefore forced.

16...♘a5

He must eliminate the white bishop at the first opportunity.

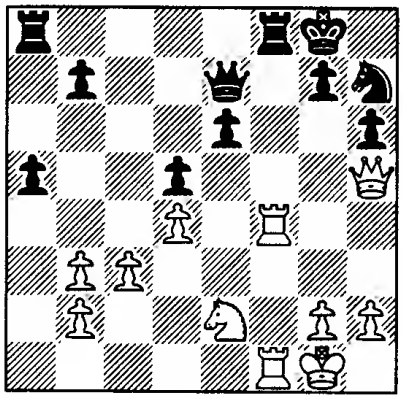
17 c3 ♘xb3 18 axb3 a5!

A good move which prevents White gaining space with 19 b4 and fixes the weak pawn on b3.

19 ♕g6 ♕e7

Necessary to prevent 20 ♖f7.

20 ♕h5



If the black knight were on d7 in this position (see move 15) Black could now play 20...b5, restraining any c3-c4 breakthrough by White and gaining play on the queenside. However, as things stand in the game the e5-square is undefended, which means that White could respond 21 ♕e5!, planning 22 ♖xf8+ followed by ♘f4 etc., with a clear advantage.

20...♘g5

The knight heads for the outpost square on e4, but, as the last note indicates, the correct role for this piece would have been the defence of the e5-square. An interesting alternative was 20...♕d6, keeping up the fight for e5, since after 21 ♖f7?! ♘g5! 22 ♖xb7? (22 ♖xf8+) 22...♖xf1+ 23 ♔xf1 ♕c6 24 ♖e7 ♔f8! Black would win a rook.

21 h4 ♘e4 22 ♕e5

White's queen dominates the centre and pressurises the e6-pawn. Its power far outweighs the knight on e4 and it cannot be challenged as 22...♕d6? loses to 23 ♖xe4.

22...♖f6 23 ♖xf6 gxf6

This solves the problem of the e5-square but weakens the kingside. If Black could maintain a centre with pawns on d5, e6 and f6 he would have a good game, but unfortunately for him his knight can be undermined with c3-c4, forcing the dislocation of his centre. Perhaps the passive 23...♘xf6 24 ♘f4 ♖e8 would have been a better defence.

24 ♕f4 ♔h7 25 c4!

This flanking blow reduces Black's centre from a compact mass into a litany of isolated pawns and weak squares.

25...♖g8 26 cxd5 exd5 27 ♖c1 ♕e6

According to Short the best defence was 27...♘d6!, when 28 ♘g3 ♖g6! is only slightly better for White. Taking this analysis further, immediate action by White would now allow Black to escape with a draw. For example, 29 ♘f5 ♕e2 30 ♘e3 ♘f5!! 31 ♖c7+ ♔h8 32 ♕xf5 ♕xe3+ 33 ♔f1 ♕e4! and White has nothing better than a draw with 34 ♖c8+ ♔h7 35 ♖c7+ ♔h8 36 ♖c8+ etc. However, the simple 29 ♔h2! would leave Black facing a most unpleasant defence.

As played White breaks through and begins to pick up the loose black pawns.

28 ♖c7+ ♖g7 29 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 30 ♕c7+ ♔f8 31 ♘f4 ♕f5 32 ♕b8+ ♔e7 33 ♕xb7+ ♔d6 34 b4!

An excellent way to clarify the position. If 34...♕xf4 35 ♕b8+.

34...axb4 35 ♕xb4+ ♔c6 36 ♕a4+ ♔b6 37 g3!

And this consolidates the kingside, as 37...♘xg3 loses the knight to 38 ♕b3+.

37...♔c7 38 ♕a5+ ♔c6 39 ♔g2 h5 40 ♕a8+ ♔d6 41 ♕d8+ 1-0

Black resigned, as he loses another pawn after 41...♔c6 42 ♕e8+ ♔d6 43 ♕xh5. The knight is still sitting pretty on e4, but what did it do?

Short's opening choice proved a great success, since Nikolic failed to find the correct middlegame strategy.

Game 36

Westerinen-A.Kuzmin

Moscow 1989

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6

A critical alternative is 4...♗b4!? Then McDonald-Law, British Championship 1997, went 5 e5 d5! 6 ♗b5+ c6 7 exf6 cxb5 8 fxg7 (perhaps this should wait) 8...♖g8 9 ♕e2+ ♗e6 10 ♘h3?! (this unusual move looks inferior to 10 ♘f3, but Black was doing very well after 10...♘c6 11 d4 ♕f6 in Chandler-Emms, London 1997) 10...♕h4+! 11 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 12 ♘xf2 (forced, as 12 ♔xf2 ♗c5+! 13 ♔f3 ♖xg7 is bad) and now the simple 12...♖xg7 must be good for Black.

5 d4?!

It may seem odd to criticise such a natural move, but this allows Black to develop his bishop aggressively to b4, when White already has to start thinking about how to save the game!

5...♗b4!

Undoubtedly the best move. After 5...d5 White can play 6 exd5 cxd5 7 ♗b5+, when the bishop is more active than it would be on b3 (this is the reason why Westerinen prefers 5 d4 to 5

♗b3).

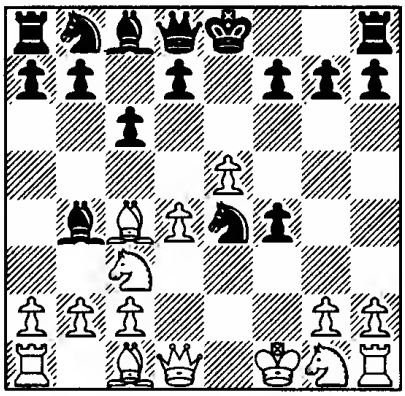
6 e5

More or less forced, in view of the threat to e4. Note that if White had played 5 ♗b3 rather than 5 d4 he could now have answered 5...♗b4 with 6 e5, when the knight has no good square, since e4 is inaccessible. Here things are different since after

6...♘e4!

Black is threatening both 7...♘xc3 and 7...♕h4+.

7 ♔f1!?



This is a Westerinen speciality. There are two alternatives. First, 7 ♕f3, which turns out badly for White after 7...d5 8 exd6 0-0 9 ♘ge2 ♕h4+ 10 g3 fxg3 11 hxg3 ♕g4 12 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 13 ♗d3 ♖e8 (Keres). Second, 7 ♕h5, which is considered in the next game.

7...♘xc3 8 bxc3 ♗xc3

Probably not best, though Black seems to have a guaranteed draw. After 8...d5! 9 exd6 ♗xd6 two excerpts from the Finnish Grandmaster's games demonstrate the problems that White faces:

a) 10 ♕f3 ♕f6 11 ♘e2 ♗e6 12 ♗b3 g5 13 ♖b1 ♗f5 14 ♗a4 ♕e7 15 ♘g3 ♗g6 16 ♗d2 ♔d8 17 ♖e1 ♕d7 18 ♘e4 g4 19 ♕f2 ♗xe4 20 ♖xe4 ♕f5 21 ♖e1 ♘d7 was better for Black in Westerinen-Hector, Gausdal 1989. The white bishops are ineffective, the white king faces a dangerous onslaught from Black's mass of pawns, and the white rook on h1 is much harder to bring into the game than the black rook on a8, which can enter the fray after ...♔c7. Nevertheless, after a hard struggle, Westerinen won this game! In the other excerpt he faced similar problems, but this time was less fortunate.

b) 10 ♕e2+ ♔f8 11 ♘f3 ♗g4 12 ♕e4 ♗xf3 13 ♕xf3 ♕c7 14 ♗d2 ♘d7 15 ♔g1 c5! 16 ♗d5 ♖b8 17 ♖f1 ♘f6 18 ♗e4 g5! 19 ♗f5 ♖g8 20 ♕f2 h6 21 h4 ♕c6 22 ♕f3 (in view of Black's build up on the kingside, White feels obliged to offer the exchange of queens, which shows his game has entirely gone) 22...♕xf3 23 ♖xf3 and White had no compensation for his pawn in Westerinen-Adams, Manila Olympiad 1992.

9 ♗a3

White has to play for the attack, at whatever cost in material. The alternative 9 ♖b1 d5 10 exd6 0-0 would be very bad for him. Now at least Black's king will remain in the centre.

9...b5!

The best move, but two other moves are worth considering:

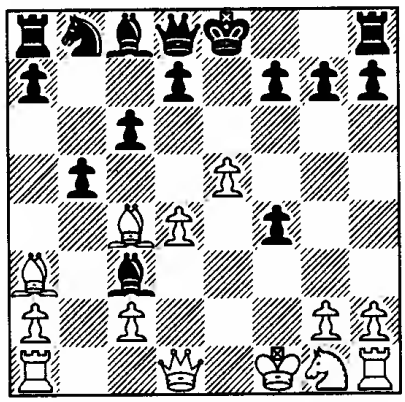
a) When I first saw this position I thought that Black could refute the attack with 9...d5, e.g. 10 exd6 ♗xa1 11 ♕e2+(?) ♗e6 12 ♗xe6 0-0!! and wins. However, Tim Wall pointed out that 11 d7+! instead of 11 ♕e2+ looked dangerous. When we analysed this move with Luke McShane on a

train to Sandwell and Dudley, we came to the conclusion that after 11...♕xd7 (11...♔xd7 12 ♕g4+) 12 ♕xa1 Black is in serious trouble, e.g. 12...b5 13 d5!?, attacking g7, or 12...b6 (intending 13...♗a6) 13 ♔f2!? ♗a6 14 ♗b3 and White is ready to develop his kingside with ♘f3 and ♖e1 etc. Black's king looks very vulnerable.

Instead of the greedy 10...♗xa1 Black could try 10...0-0, but then 11 ♖b1 b5 12 d7 wins the exchange and looks good for White.

b) Another alternative to the game move is the immediate 9...♗xa1, as in Rahman-Formanek, New York 1993. This seems wrong, since after 10 ♗d6 b5 11 ♕g4 g6 it is difficult to see how Black can defend against the simple 12 ♗b3!, threatening 13 ♕xf4 and then mate on f7. For example, 12...a5 13 ♕xf4 ♖f8 (if 13...f6 14 exf6 and the f-pawn kills Black) 14 ♕h6! (Black was hoping for 14 ♗xf8 d5, though this should also lose after 15 exd6) 14...♖g8 15 ♕xh7 ♖f8 16 ♕g7 and wins. Or if 12...f5 13 ♕xf4 (threatening 14 ♕h6 and 15 ♕g7) 13...h6 14 ♘h3! (not 14 ♕g3 ♕g5) 14...♗a6 (what else?) 15 ♕g3 g5 16 ♕f3 (threatening mate) 16... g4 17 ♕xf5 and wins. In the game Rahman played the weaker 12 ♕xf4, when 12...bxc4 13 ♕h6 ♕e7 (the only defence against 14 ♕g7) 14 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 led to a strange material balance. I imagine that White is at least equal and maybe much better. However, in view of the strength of 12 ♗b3 this position is only of curiosity value.

Black's idea in our main game is more sensible. He plans to answer 10 ♗b3 with 10...b4, blocking off the bishop on a3 and thereby securing the right to castle. Black would then be winning, since nothing would remain of White's attack on the king.



10 ♗d6!!

The only move but nevertheless a striking one. The bishop avoids being shut out with 10...b4 and clamps down on the d-pawn, making it impossible for Black to free his game with ...d7-d5. It seems highly unlikely that Black will ever be able to remove or challenge the bishop, since his own dark-squared bishop is a long way from the kingside and none of his other pieces can easily approach the d6-square. This means that Black cannot hope to secure the right to castle and, as will be seen, White's queen can join in the attack and seriously threaten the black king.

10...bxc4

The bishop was the more threatening piece; hence Black captures it before the rook. An interesting alternative was 10...h5!?, depriving the white queen of its natural attacking square on g4 and preparing the exchange sacrifice ...♖h6 and ...♖xd6 in some lines. If White loses his nerve with 11 ♖b1

then he gets a bad game after 11...bxc4 12 ♗xb8 d5! 13 exd6(?) ♗g4! etc. So he has to continue in enterprising style with 11 ♗b3 ♗xa1 12 ♘f3. Now if Black tries to save his bishop then he falls under a decisive attack, e.g. 12...♗c3 13 ♕d3 b4 14 ♕f5 ♖f8 15 ♘g5 ♗a6+ 16 ♔f2 ♗xd4+ 17 ♔f3 wins for White. But Black has a better defence which involves bringing the knight to e6 to paralyse White's attack: 12...♘a6! 13 ♕d3? ♘c7 14 ♕f5 ♘e6 and the knight on e6 blocks the attack. So 12...♘a6 is best answered by 13 ♕xa1, when 13...♘c7 14 ♔f2 ♘e6 is not at all clear.

11 ♕g4 g6

Virtually the only move, as 11...♖g8 12 ♕h3 ♗xa1 13 ♕xh7 ♖f8 14 ♕xg7 wins. Also, 11...g5 fails to 12 ♘h3!, planning 13 ♘xf4 gxf4 (else 14 ♘h5 and 15 ♘f6 destroys Black) 14 ♕g7. The game Rut-Connors, Correspondence 1989-91 (did it really take them three years?), continued 12...♗d2 13 ♘f2 c3 14 ♘e4 ♗a6+ 15 ♔f2 ♗e3+ 16 ♔e1 ♕b6 17 ♕xg5 ♗d2+ 18 ♘xd2 cxd2+ 19 ♔d1 and Black resigned. These variations reveal the theme of White's onslaught. He wants to attack the black rook from g7, when it will have nowhere safe to go. Then Black will not only lose his rook but will also be mated, since his king has no way to escape from the back rank.

12 ♕h3

This seems better than 12 ♕xf4, with the same idea of ♕h6 and ♕g7, since the bishop on c3 is attacked.

12...♗xa1 13 ♕h6

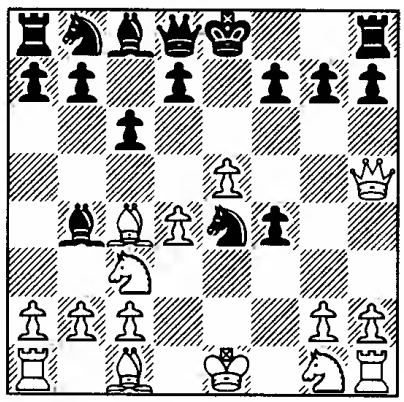
Now White to move would win with 14 ♕g7. However, Black has just enough counterplay to force a draw.

13...♕b6 14 ♘e2 ♗xd4 15 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 16 ♕g7 ♕d1+ 17 ♔f2 ♕xc2+ 18 ♔f1 ½-½

White cannot evade perpetual check, e.g. 18 ♔f3 ♕d3+ 19 ♔g4 ♕f5+ 20 ♔h4?? (20 ♔f3) 20...♕h5 mate. A most unusual game.

Game 37
Westerinen-Pakkanen
Helsinki 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6 5 d4 ♗b4 6 e5 ♘e4 7 ♕h5



A clever idea: White rules out one nasty check (7...♕h4+) and threatens one of his own on f7. If Black responds with 7...0-0 then 8 ♘ge2, intending 9 0-0, looks good for White. Black's reply in the game is therefore critical.

7...g6! 8 ♕f3

Here 8 ♕h6?! looks a little too far-fetched even for Westerinen. If Black accepts the offer immediately with 8...♘xc3 then there are wild complications, e.g. 9 bxc3 ♗xc3+ 10 ♔d1 ♗xa1 11 ♕g7 ♖f8 12 ♗a3 d6! 13 ♗xd6 ♘d7 14 ♗xf8 ♘xe5! 15 ♗c5! ♗g4+ 16 ♗e2

♗xe2+ 17 ♘xe2 ♘g4 18 ♕f8+ ♔d7 19 ♕xf7+ ♔c8 20 ♕e6+ ♕d7 21 ♕g8+ ♕d8 22 ♕e6+ with a draw! However, the usual antidote in such positions seems very good for Black: 8...d5! ruins White's plans.

8...♕h4+

If Black now plays 8...d5 then we are following Keres's analysis to 7 ♕f3 in Game 36, the sole difference being that the black pawn is on g6 rather than g7. Can White exploit this? The answer seems to be 'Yes', as after 9 exd6 0-0 10 ♘ge2 ♕h4+ 11 g3 fxg3 12 hxg3 ♕g4 White has the strong move 13 ♕e3! with the possible variations:

a) 13...♘f6 14 ♗d2 ♗xd6 15 0-0-0 with attacking chances.

b) 13...♖e8?! 14 ♖xh7! ♔xh7 15 ♗xf7 (threatening mate on h6 and attacking the rook on e8) 15...♕h5 16 ♗xe8 ♕h1+ 17 ♘g1 ♗f5 18 ♗d2 ♗xd6 19 0-0-0 with a clear advantage to White. Both of these variations would be impossible if the black g-pawn were still on g7.

9 ♔f1!

This is better than 9 g3?, when after 9...fxg3 10 ♗xf7+ (no better is 10 ♕xf7+ ♔d8) 10...♔e7 11 hxg3 ♕xg3+ 12 ♕xg3 ♘xg3 13 ♖h3 ♔xf7 14 ♖xg3 d5 Black achieved a winning endgame in Westerinen-Ernst, Helsinki 1991.

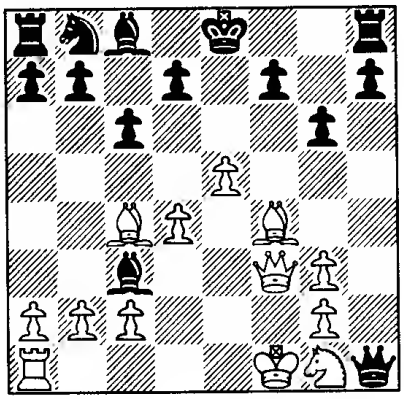
9...♘g3+?

A serious mistake. In his analysis of the Westerinen-Ernst game mentioned in the previous note, Ernst recommends 9...d5! 10 exd6 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 ♗xd6 12 ♕e4+ ♕e7 13 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 14 ♘e2, which he assesses as equal. I think that Black has an edge. Anyway, it is clearly a waste of the first move if this is the best White can do.

10 hxg3!

Now everything goes smoothly for White.

10...♕xh1 11 ♗xf4 ♗xc3



Black is defenceless. If 11...0-0 12 ♘e4, planning 13 ♘f6+ etc., when both the black king and queen will be in danger of being trapped.

12 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 13 e6+!

Played in Morphy style.

13...♔xe6

If 13...dxe6 14 ♗d6+ ♔g7 (14...♔e8 15 ♕f6) 15 ♗e5+ ♔g8 16 ♕f6 ♕h6 17 ♕xh8+ ♔f7 18 ♕xc8 destroys Black.

14 ♗e5! ♕h5 15 ♕f6+ ♔d5 16 ♕d6+ ♔e4 17 bxc3! ♖f8+

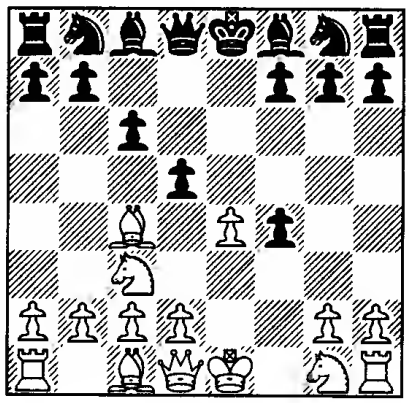
There is no answer to 18 ♖e1+.

18 ♗f4 ♖xf4+ 19 ♕xf4+ ♔d5 20 g4! 1-0

A nice finishing touch to a very pretty game. If the black queen moves to safety, it is mate in two.

Game 38
Ivanchuk-Piket
Linares 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗c4 c6 4 ♘c3 d5



A very aggressive approach, but almost certainly inferior to 4...♘f6.

5 exd5 ♕h4+ 6 ♔f1 f3!?

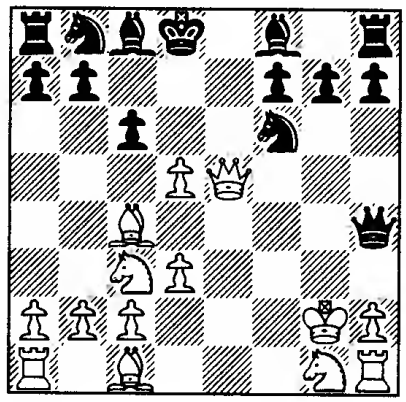
Short admitted that he was 'more than a little concerned about this idea' when he essayed the Bishop's Gambit against Nikolic (see Game 35). Indeed, at first sight it seems very strong: the charging pawn uncovers an attack by the queen on the bishop on c4 and prepares to almost completely denude the white king with ...f3xg2+. Nevertheless, as the Russian proverb says 'one man in the field isn't an army.' Black's only active piece is his queen and it is against the logic of chess for White to suddenly find that he has a bad position. Although of course chess isn't always a logical game...!

7 d3 fxg2+ 8 ♔xg2 ♘f6 9 ♕e2+!

This is the first indication that all is not well with Black's position. He now has to give up his castling rights, as after 9...♗e7 10 d6 wins a piece.

9...♔d8 10 ♕e5!

Ivanchuk finds an excellent way to solve the problems of the position. The queen takes control of the centre and rules out Black's developing move 10...♗d6. Furthermore, if attacked the queen plans to drop back to either f4 or g3 to shelter the king. For example, after 10...♘bd7 the reply is 11 ♕g3. Black can then either agree to an exchange of queens, when the endgame is much worse for him (why is explained below) or retreat his queen, when he loses valuable time.



10...♕f2+?

Short recommends 10...♕g4+, but White is better after 11 ♕g3. The game move is rather defeatist: Black forces an endgame where White no longer has to worry about his exposed king. In fact, White has excellent winning chances due to his enormous lead in development. All the white pieces can be quickly mobilised and brought to key points in the centre. Meanwhile, it will be a long time before the black rook on a8 will have any bearing on the game.

11 ♔xf2 ♘g4+ 12 ♔g2 ♘xe5 13 ♗f4 ♘g6?!

According to Short, Black's best chance was 13...♘xc4, removing one of the dangerous attacking pieces. Nevertheless, one can sympathise with Piket, who clearly did not like the idea of being left with all his pieces on the

back rank after 13 moves!

14 ♗g3 f6 15 ♘f3 ♗b4 16 ♘d4 ♗d7 17 ♘e6+!

A wise transaction. White acquires the two bishops and a gigantic passed pawn.

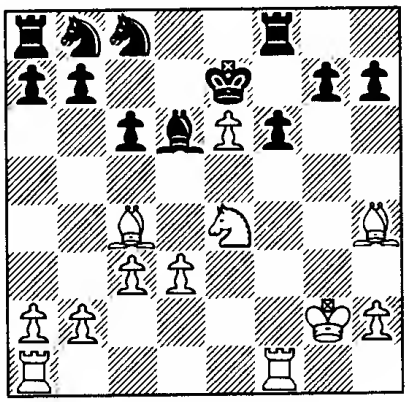
17...♗xe6 18 dxe6

White's opening surprise has been a marvellous success. Piket knows a huge amount of modern opening theory but has been completely unable to adjust to the demands of this archaic gambit.

18...♘e7 19 ♖hf1 ♘c8 20 ♘e4 ♔e7 21 ♗h4

Threatening 22 ♘xf6!

21...♖f8 22 c3 ♗d6



23 ♔h1!

A clever retreat, clearing the g-file for an attack with the rooks.

23...b5 24 ♗b3 ♘a6 25 a4!

White plans an attack on both sides of the board and in the centre. Black's pieces are so disorganised that he cannot resist an onslaught on such a wide front.

25...♘c7 26 axb5 cxb5 27 d4 a5 28 ♖f3 a4 29 ♗a2 ♖a6 30 ♖g1 ♘e8 31 ♖f5 a3 32 ♖xb5 g5 33 ♖b7+ ♘c7 34 ♘xd6 ♖xd6

Black also loses a knight after 34...♔xd6 35 ♗g3+.

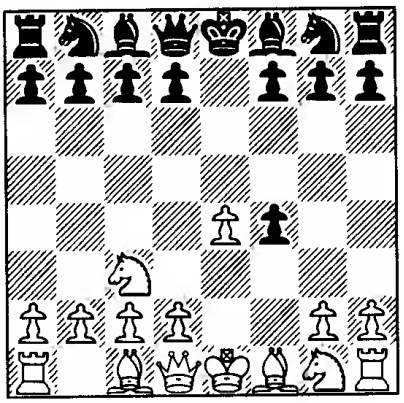
35 ♖xc7+ ♔d8 36 ♖f7 1-0

Game 39

Spassky-Furman

Tallinn 1959

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘c3



White's other third moves can be dismissed quickly:

a) 3 ♕f3 turned out badly for White in Paoli-Prins, Venedig 1949, after 3...♘c6! 4 ♕xf4 ♗d6 5 ♕e3 ♘f6 6 ♗e2 ♕e7 7 ♘c3 ♗c5, when Black already had a clear advantage.

b) 3 ♗e2 was played three times by Tartakower at the great New York 1924 tournament and achieved a highly creditable 1½/3 score against Capablanca, Alekhine and Bogolyubov. (David Bronstein contends that Tartakower was the greatest player of all time since he could play any opening successfully!) However, 3 ♗e2 doesn't stand up to modern analytical scrutiny. According to Csom, Black can get the advantage with 3...d5!, e.g. 4 exd5 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♘xd5 6 c4 ♘e7 7 d4 ♘g6 8 ♘c3 ♗d6 9 h4 h5

10 ♘e4 ♗f5.

Spassky's choice of the Mason Gambit in our illustrative game was good psychology, despite its dubious reputation. Grandmaster Furman had made a deep study of well-known opening variations. If something was going to unnerve him, this was it!

3...♕h4+

This check is much more disruptive here than after 3 ♗c4, since the white king is forced to go to e2, where it shuts in the bishop on f1. Since the white king's bishop is often the magic wand for White's attack, this is not a good state of affairs. Furthermore, the entombed white bishop denies the king a shelter on f1.

Also possible was 3...♘c6, when 4 d4 ♕h4+ 5 ♔e2 d6 6 ♘f3 ♗g4 7 ♗xf4 (or 7 ♘d5 0-0-0 8 ♔d3 ♕h6 9 ♗xf4 ♕h5 - this square is safe now that ♘xf4 is impossible - 10 c4 f5! and White's king was looking uncomfortable in Kavalek-Stein, Tel Aviv 1964) 7...0-0-0 proved good for Black in Barle-Portisch, Portoroz 1975. White tried 8 ♔e3, but Black gained a strong attack after 8...♕h5 9 ♗e2 g5! 10 ♘xg5 ♘f6 11 h3 ♗xe2 12 ♕xe2 ♕g6 (with the threat of 13...♘h5) 13 d5 (something has gone wrong for White if he has nothing better than this anti-positional move) 13...♘e5 14 ♘f3 ♗h6! etc.

However, it is worth checking on h4 as soon as possible, because after 3...♘c6 White is given the chance to chicken out of the Mason Gambit with 4 ♘f3!

4 ♔e2 d5

The most energetic response. Black opens lines for his pieces as a prelude to a direct attack on White's king. Instead 4...d6 5 ♘f3 ♗g4 6 d4 etc. would transpose to the Barle-Portisch game of the last note. However, 6 ♘d5! is better, when 6...♗xf3+?! (6...♕d8!? - Korchnoi) 7 gxf3 ♔d8 8 d3!, as in Keres-Kunerth, Correspondence 1936, is good for White according to Korchnoi.

5 ♘xd5 ♗d6

After 5...♗g4+ 6 ♘f3 Black could transpose back into our game with 6...♗d6 7 d4. However, he has the additional option of 6...♘c6!?, which is discussed in the next game.

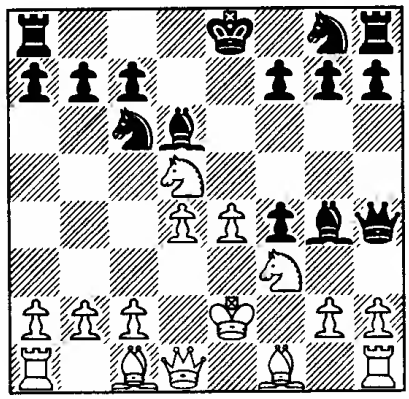
6 d4 ♗g4+ 7 ♘f3 ♘c6

Black can also consider two other knight moves:

a) 7...♘f6 8 ♘xf6+ gxf6 9 c3 was played in Bronstein-Alatortsev, USSR Championship 1945. After 9...♗xf3+ 10 gxf3 c5 11 dxc5 ♗xc5 12 ♕e1 (stopping 12...♕f2+) 12...♕g5 13 ♕d2 ♕h4, Bronstein made a winning attempt with 14 ♕xf4, when after 14...♕f2+ 15 ♔d1 ♘c6 16 ♗d2 ♖d8 Black had a dangerous attack. However, Bronstein won on time at move 33. Since in our main game Furman loses on time after 31 moves, this really is a tricky opening to face!

b) Another alternative for Black is 7...♘e7. Then theory gives 8 ♘xe7? ♕xe7 9 e5 f6 10 ♗xf4 fxe5 11 dxe5 ♘c6, as in Ashikhin-V.Zhuravlev, Yurmala 1964, with a big advantage to Black. White's opening has failed if he has to exchange knights on e7 unless he gets some large compensating advantage. Instead, 8 ♘xf4 looks critical, when violent attacks by Black seem to

fail, e.g. 8...♗xf3+? 9 ♔xf3 g5? 10 g3 ♕h6 11 ♘h3 ♕h5+ 12 g4 ♕g6 13 ♘xg5.



8 e5?

This is too ambitious. White should play 8 c3!, when things are not at all clear. For example, 8 c3! 0-0-0 9 ♔d3 and now:

a) 9...♕h6?! 10 ♔c2 ♘ge7 11 ♘xe7+ ♘xe7 12 ♗d3 (not 12 e5 ♗xe5).

b) 9...♕h5 10 ♔c2! (avoiding 10 ♘xf4 ♗xf4 11 ♗xf4 ♘f6 12 h3 ♖he8) 10...♘f6 (10...f5?! 11 e5!?) 11 ♘xf6 gxf6. In both cases with unclear play.

8...0-0-0 9 ♗xf4

It is doubtful that White's king could survive the attack after 9 exd6 ♖xd6 10 c4 ♘f6!, e.g. 11 ♗xf4 and now:

a) 11...♖e8+ 12 ♔d3 ♘xd5 (12...♗f5+ 13 ♔d2 ♕f2+ 14 ♔c1) 13 cxd5 ♗xf3 14 ♕xf3 ♖xd5! or, perhaps better,

b) 11...♘xd5!, e.g. 12 ♗xd6 ♖e8+ 13 ♗e5 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♖xe5+ 15 ♔d2 ♕h6+ 16 ♔c2 ♘e3+.

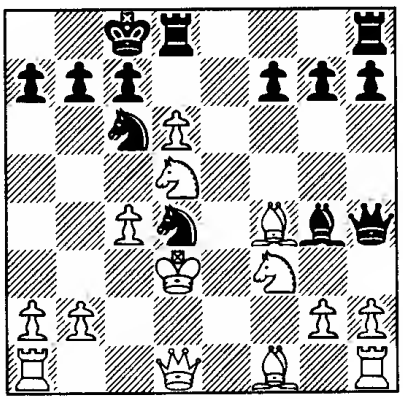
9...♘ge7 10 c4

In Lyell-Flear, British Championship 1989, White tried to improve with 10 ♗g3. However, he was quickly defeated: 10...♕h6 11 ♘xe7+ ♗xe7 12 c3 f6! 13 e6 (trying to keep the centre blocked; Black would have had a huge attack after 13 exf6 ♗xf6 and 14...♖he8+) 13...f5 14 ♕a4 ♕xe6+ 15 ♔f2 ♕h6! (now there is no good answer to the threat of 16...f4) 16 ♔g1 ♖he8 17 ♗b5 ♗xf3 18 gxf3 ♕e3+ 19 ♔g2 ♕d2+ 20 ♗f2 ♗h4 21 ♖hf1 ♖d6 22 ♖ad1 ♕f4 23 ♗xh4 ♕xh4 24 ♗xc6? (a blunder but in any case Black's attack is overwhelming) 24...♖e2+ 0-1.

10...♘f5?

Bewildered by a multitude of possibilities, Furman goes wrong. After the game, he claimed that 10...♗b4! would have been very strong. This seems correct, e.g. 10...♗b4 11 a3 (11 g3 ♕h5 is bad for White) 11...♘xd5 12 cxd5 ♖xd5 13 ♔e3 (forced) 13...♗xf3 14 ♕xf3 g5! etc.

11 exd6 ♘fxd4+ 12 ♔d3!



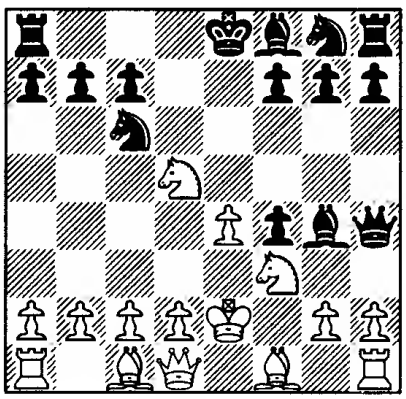
With some precise moves Spassky demonstrates that Black's piece offer is unsound.

12...♕h5 13 ♗e2 ♘e6 14 ♗g3 cxd6 15 b4 ♖he8 16 ♖e1 ♘c7 17 ♔c3 ♕h6 18 ♕c1 ♘xd5+ 19 cxd5 ♖e3+ 20 ♗d3 ♕f6+ 21 ♔c2 ♖xe1 22 ♗xe1 ♗xf3 23 dxc6 ♗xc6 24 ♗c3

♕f2+ 25 ♕d2 ♗a4+ 26 ♔b2 ♕h4 27 ♗xg7 ♔b8 28 g3 ♕g4 29 ♗f6 ♖c8 30 ♖c1 ♖e8 31 b5 1-0

Game 40
C.Horvath-J.Horvath
Budapest 1995

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘c3 ♕h4+ 4 ♔e2 d5 5 ♘xd5 ♗g4+ 6 ♘f3 ♘c6!?



Black's most aggressive response, gambiting the rook on a8 for an attack. The drawback to this idea is that the line has been more or less worked out to a forced draw, when in fact Black should be looking for more than a draw after the reckless 3 ♘c3. Nevertheless, I don't think the draw verdict of theory was a problem for Josef Horvath, who was playing his brother Csaba here and seems to be in no mood for fratricide.

7 ♘xc7+

White does best to accept the offer:

a) 7 d4? works out badly after 7...0-0-0, e.g. 8 ♗xf4 (8 c3 f5 9 ♕d3 ♘f6 10 ♘xf6 gxf6 11 ♗xf4 fxe4 12 ♕xe4 ♗h6 gave Black a winning position in Keres-Kunerth, Correspondence 1936. A possible finish is 13 ♗xh6 ♖he8 14 ♔d3 ♕h5 15 ♕f4 ♗f5+ 16 ♔d2 ♖e4 17 ♕g3 ♕xh6+ 18 ♔d1 ♘xd4 19 cxd4 ♖dxd4+ 20 ♘xd4 ♖xd4+ etc.) 8...f5 9 ♔e3 ♗xf3 10 gxf3 ♘f6 11 ♘xf6 ♖xd4 12 ♕e1 ♕xf6 with a clear advantage to Black.

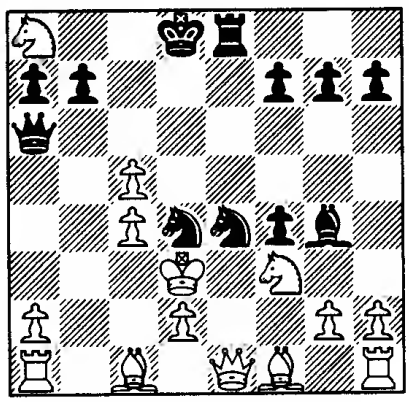
b) However, 7 c3 is an interesting attempt for advantage, when the best reply is 7...0-0-0 (7...f5 is also worth investigating, e.g. 8 ♘xc7+ ♔d7 9 ♘xa8 fxe4. Note that after 7...♘e5 8 d4! Black cannot win the white queen by capturing twice on f3 followed by ...♕h5+ and ...♕xd1, as there is a bishop check on b5 followed by ♖xd1, regaining the queen) 8 ♕e1 ♕xe1+ (8...♕h5 9 ♘xf4 ♕e5 10 d3 f5 is unclear) 9 ♔xe1 ♖e8 (or 9...f5 10 d3 fxe4 11 dxe4) 10 d4 ♖xe4+ 11 ♔f2 with level chances - variation by Glaskov.

7...♔d8 8 ♘xa8 ♘e5

Here 8...♘d4+ 9 ♔d3 ♕f6!? is a tricky alternative which was introduced in the game Jago-J.Littlewood, Correspondence 1964-65. That game went 10 c3 (what about the calm 10 ♗e2!?, e.g. 10...♗c5 11 c3 ♕a6+ 12 c4 ♕d6 13 ♘xd4 ♕xd4+ 14 ♔c2 ♕xe4+ 15 d3 ♕xg2 16 ♗xf4 ♗xe2 17 ♕d2 ♘f6 18 ♖ae1 ♖e8 19 ♘c7+ and White wins, though of course this is by no means the whole story) 10..♕a6+ 11 c4 ♗c5 12 b4 ♘f6 13 bxc5 ♘xe4 14 ♕e1 ♖e8 and now the game went

see following diagram

15 ♕xe4 ♖xe4 (if 15...♗f5 16 ♕xf5 ♘xf5 17 ♗b2 ♕g6 [17...♔d7 18 c6+ bxc6 19 ♘e5+ ♔c8 20 g3, planning ♗g2 or ♗h3, and White should win] 18 ♔c3 and the white king escapes the attack) 16 ♔xe4 ♘xf3.



Now Littlewood recommends 17 ♘b6! as unclear, though I suspect that despite his exposed king the rook and two bishops give White the better chances after the plausible 17...axb6 18 gxf3 bxc5 19 fxg4 ♕c6+ 20 ♔xf4 ♕xh1 etc. Instead the game went 17 gxf3? ♕c6+ and Black won.

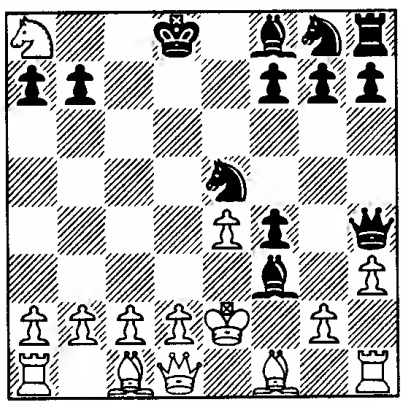
Panov and Estrin point out the alternative 15 ♕h4+ and claim that Black has a strong attack after 15... g5 16 ♘xg5 ♘xc5+ 17 ♔xd4 ♕f6+ 18 ♔xc5 ♕e7+ 19 ♔d4 ♕e5+ 20 ♔d3 ♗f5+ 21 ♘e4+ ♔c8 22 ♔c2 ♕xe4+. However, White can weather the storm with the seemingly highly risky 23 ♔b3 ♕c2+ 24 ♔a3 ♖e6 25 ♕xf4 ♖a6+ 26 ♔b4 ♕a4+ 27 ♔c3 ♕a5+ 28 ♔d4 ♕d8+ 29 ♔e3 ♖e6+ 30 ♔f2 and wins. At move 19 Black should therefore force a draw with 19...♕f6+ 20 ♔c5 ♕e7+ 21 ♔d4 ♕f6+ etc.

9 h3

Not 9 d4? since White loses his queen after the continuation 9...♘xf3 10 gxf3 ♗xf3+ 11 ♔xf3 ♕h5+ 12 ♔f2 ♕xd1.

9...♗xf3+

Although 9...♘xf3? 10 hxg4 ♘g1+ 11 ♔d3 ♕xh1 12 c3 f3 13 gxf3 ♘xf3 14 ♔c2 would be good for White, 9...♗h5!? deserves attention. The critical variation is then 10 d4 ♘xf3 11 gxf3 ♗xf3+ 12 ♔xf3 ♕h5+ 13 ♔g2 ♕xd1 14 ♗d3 ♕h5 15 ♗xf4. The game Arkhipkin-Klovan, Riga 1974, continued 15...♘e7 16 ♖hf1 ♘g6 17 ♗g3 ♗e7. Bangiev claims that this is unclear or perhaps slightly better for Black. Certainly this is an interesting material balance.



10 gxf3 ♕g3 11 d3

After 11 d4 Black has no choice but to force a draw with 11...♕xf3+ 12 ♔e1 ♕g3+ 13 ♔e2 ♕f3+ etc. The game move, by not attacking the knight on e5, gives Black the chance to play for a win.

11...♕xf3+ 12 ♔e1 ♕g3+

The last winning try was 12...♕xh1, when 13 ♗xf4 ♘f3+ 14 ♔e2! ♗c5 15 c3 ♘f6 16 ♕a4 gives a double-edged game – Kuindzhi.

13 ♔e2 ♕f3+ ½-½

Summary

The fashionable reply to the Bishop's Gambit 3 ♗c4 is 3...c6 4 ♘c3 ♘f6 (or 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6), when White should prefer 5 ♗b3! d5 6 exd5 cxd5 7 d4 (Game 35) to 5 d4?! (Games 36 and 37). Black's best choice may be the relatively unexplored 3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 ♗b4!? (see the notes to Game 36) or 3...♘c6!?, though the latter may involve learning a large amount of the archaic Hanstein and other theory contained in Chapter 3!

Although theory has not yet found a refutation of the Mason Gambit 3 ♘c3 (Games 39-40), White immediately loses his 'birthright' of a slight opening advantage. Nevertheless, this double-edged opening will continue to appeal to those willing to take risks.

White's other third move alternatives, 3 ♗e2 and 3 ♕f3 (Game 39) are not to be recommended.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4

3 ♗c4

3 ♘c3 ♕h4+ 4 ♔e2 d5 5 ♘xd5 *(D)*

5...♗d6 – *Game 39*

5...♗g4+ – *Game 40*

3...c6

3...♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6 – see *Games 35-37* (by transposition)

4 ♘c3 *(D)* **♘f6**

4...d5 – *Game 38*

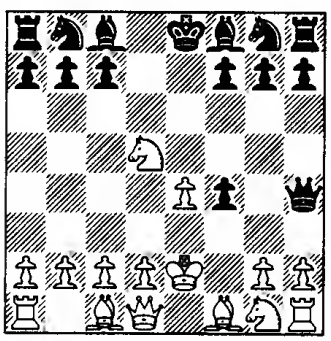
5 ♗b3

5 d4 ♗b4 6 e5 ♘e4 *(D)*

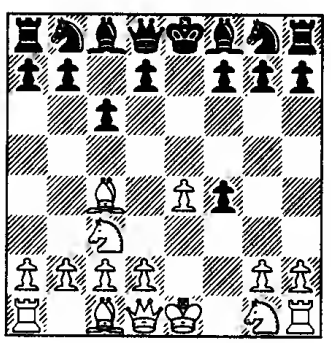
7 ♔f1 – Game 36

7 ♕h5 – Game 37

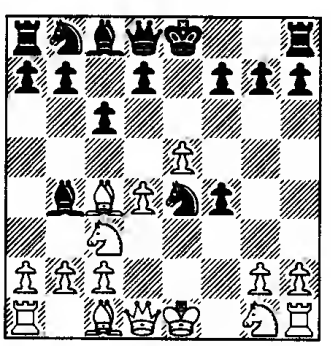
5...d5 – *Game 35*



5 ♘xd5

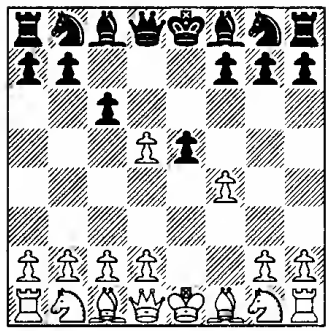


4 ♘c3



6...♘e4

CHAPTER SEVEN



Nimzowitsch Counter-Gambit (2...d5 3 exd5 c6)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6

In the Nimzowitsch Counter-Gambit Black's strategy is similar in spirit to that of the Modern Defence (Chapter 5): he deflects White's e-pawn with ...d7-d5 so that developing moves such as ...♘f6 and ...♗d6 can be made without worrying about the reply e4-e5. However, in contrast to the Modern Defence, Black plays very dynamically here. Thus the d5-pawn is eliminated with 3...c6, rather than exchanged for the f4-pawn as occurs in the Modern Defence.

In Games 41 and 42 Black sacrifices his e-pawn with 4 ♘c3 cxd5, hoping to regain it later with a freer game. However, this line has now been superseded by 4...exf4 (Games 43-45), when the f4-pawn gives Black a space advantage on the kingside and controls e3, an important centre square. However, the drawback to all this is that White has a much more healthy pawn structure for the endgame. If Black fails to generate counterplay, he will suffer in the later stages of the game, as occurs in Games 44 and 45. Somewhat surprisingly, White can play for an attack on the kingside, which works well in Games 43 and 44. However, Black's problems in these games were largely caused by his adoption of an inferior move order, as is explained in Game 45.

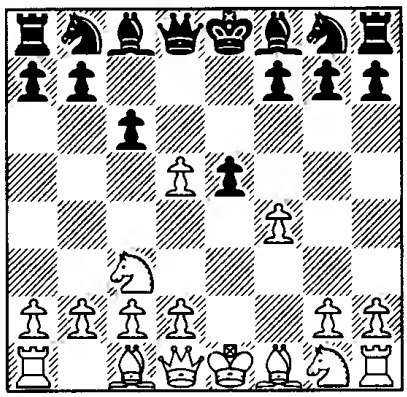
Game 41
Boudre-G.Flear
Pau 1988

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3

An interesting alternative idea is 4 ♕e2, which wins the e5-pawn but leaves White with a congested position. A possible continuation is 4...cxd5 5 fxe5 ♘c6 6 ♘f3 (6 c3 d4! 7 ♘f3 ♘ge7 8 d3 ♘g6 9 ♕e4 ♗c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♘b3 f5! was good for Black in the old game Alekhine-Johner, Carlsbad 1911) 6...♗c5 (or 6...♗g4 7 ♕f2 ♗xf3 8 gxf3 ♗e7! 9 ♕e2 ♗h4+ 10 ♔d1 ♘h6, which Bangiev gives as unclear, though I would rather play Black here) 7 c3 d4! (an important

move, preventing White's consolidating 8 d4) 8 d3 ♘ge7 9 ♘bd2 0-0 10 ♘b3 ♗b6 11 ♗g5 ♖e8 12 0-0-0 a5 with unclear play in Penttinen-Sakovich, Lubniewice 1994.

However, 4 dxc6 is insipid, after which 4...♘xc6 5 ♗b5 exf4 6 ♘f3 ♗d6 7 d4 ♘e7 8 0-0 0-0 was Ree-Short, Wijk aan Zee 1986. Black has completed his development smoothly and the white bishop could prove to be misplaced on b5.



4...cxd5?!

The alternative 4...exf4, which seems the better move, is examined below in Games 43-45.

5 fxe5 d4

Also possible is 5...♘c6, when the game Gallagher-Milovanovic, Liechtenstein 1990, continued 6 d4 ♕h4+ 7 g3 ♕xd4 8 ♗f4 ♗b4 9 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 10 0-0-0 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♘c6 12 ♖xd5 ♘ge7 13 ♖d6 ♗e6 14 ♘f3. The two bishops plus the extra doubled pawn must be worth something, and it is no surprise that White eventually won.

6 ♘e4

Instead, 6 ♗b5+!? is the subject of Game 42.

6...♕d5 7 d3

This quiet move is the prelude to a surprisingly sharp battle. In Gallagher-Sinkovics, Loosdorf 1993, White preferred 7 ♗d3 and obtained an advantage after 7...♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♘xe5 9 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 10 0-0 ♗e6 11 ♕e2 ♘e7 12 ♗b5+ ♘c6 13 ♗xc6+ bxc6 14 d3 ♗e7 15 ♗f4 ♕d5 etc., though Black held on to draw. In fact, it appears that White can play more accurately. At move 11, 11 b3! was a better try, planning ♗b2, perhaps combined with c2-c3 to open lines for the bishop. Play could go 11...♗e7 12 ♗b2 ♘f6 13 ♕f3 0-0 (13...0-0-0!? may be best to add to the defence of d4) 14 ♖ae1 and Black's position looks awkward.

7...♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♘xe5 9 ♗e2 f5

This move has been criticised, but I can't see how Black can achieve a fully equal game if he fails to disrupt White's build-up. For example, if 9...♗e7 10 0-0 ♘f6 then 11 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 12 ♗f4 looks slightly awkward for Black, as 12...♕e6 allows 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♗f3 when the pressure on b7 makes it difficult for Black to develop his queen's bishop. The alternative 12...♕b5 allows the sacrifice 13 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 14 ♗xd6 ♕xb2, which looks dangerous for Black after 15 ♖b1 ♕xa2 16 ♗f3 etc.

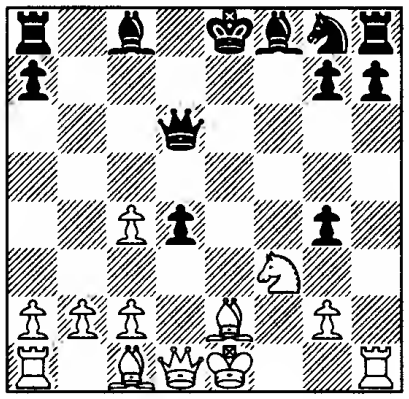
10 ♘ed2 ♘g4 11 ♘c4 b5

11...♗b4+ is met by 12 c3! with ideas of 13 ♕a4+.

12 h3! bxc4

Here 12...♗b4+ is still dubious because of 13 c3 dxc3 14 0-0! bxc4 15 hxg4, planning 16 ♕a4+, or perhaps the immediate check 15 ♕a4+ is even better.

13 hxg4 fxg4 14 dxc4 ♕d6?!



A crucial moment. Black is enticed by the idea of checking the white king on g3. Instead, he could have prepared to attack the white king where it is going to be, rather than where it is currently placed. The manoeuvre 14...♕a5+ 15 ♗d2 (if 15 ♘d2 ♘f6) 15...♕b6 was highly interesting. At first it seems that Black has lost time with the check on a5, but the point is that White's key move – castles – is rendered dubious, i.e. 16 0-0 d3+ 17 ♔h1 dxe2 18 ♕xe2+ ♗e7 and it is by no means clear how White can continue his attack – the loss of the bishop on e2 has removed most of the dynamism from his position. After 15...♕b6, White could try 16 ♘e5 but then 16...♗d6!? seems a good answer, e.g. 17 ♘xg4? d3! 18 cxd3 (18 ♗xd3 is met the same way) 18...♗g3+ 19 ♔f1 ♗xg4 and in view of the threatened mate on f2 Black wins a piece.

However, all is not rosy for Black. White's best response is 16 ♘g5!, when 16...♘f6 17 ♗d3! should be good for him. If 17...♗d6 18 ♕e2+, preparing 19 0-0-0 etc. Or if 17...♗e7 then again 18 ♕e2, answering 18...♕xb2 with 19 0-0 followed by 20 ♖ae1 with a massive attack.

Therefore, we must conclude that the whole variation seems dubious for Black, perhaps as far back as 5...d4.

15 0-0!

Black is now clearly in trouble as the acceptance of the piece sacrifice with 15...gxf3 gives White a decisive attack, e.g. 16 ♗xf3 ♖b8 17 ♗f4! ♕b6 18 ♗xb8 ♕xb8 19 ♗c6+ ♗d7 20 ♕h5+ with a massacre.

15...♗b7 16 ♕e1 ♗e7 17 ♘g5 ♘f6 18 ♗d3 0-0

The immediate 18...♕c6 falters after 19 ♖f2 g3 20 ♖e2 0-0 21 ♘e6 ♖f7 22 ♕xg3 etc.

19 ♗f4 ♕c6 20 ♕e6+

Black is forced into an endgame in which the d4-pawn is soon lost. Flear puts up a tough fight but eventually has to submit to the inevitable.

20...♕xe6 21 ♘xe6 ♖f7 22 ♘g5 ♖ff8 23 ♘e6 ♖f7 24 ♗e5 ♗c8 25 ♘xd4 ♗c5 26 c3 a5 27 g3 ♗b7 28 ♖ae1 ♖e8 29 ♗xf6 ♖xe1 30 ♖xe1 ♖xf6 31 ♗e4 ♗xe4 32 ♖xe4 h5 33 ♖e5 ♗d6 34 ♖xh5 ♗xg3 35 ♖g5 ♗f2+ 36 ♔g2 ♗e3 37 ♖b5 ♗f4 38 ♖f5 ♗c1 39 ♖xf6 gxf6 40 b4 a4 41 ♔g3 ♗d2 42 b5 ♗xc3 43 ♘c6 f5 44 b6 1-0

White played very accurately in the technical phase.

Game 42

McDonald-Petr

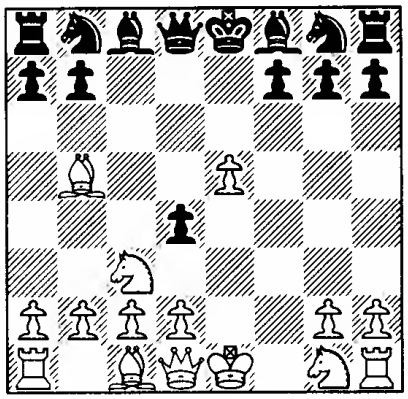
Catford 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3 cxd5?! 5 fxe5 d4

Whilst preparing for this tournament game, I examined the Boudre-

Flear game above. I wondered why White didn't develop his king's bishop instead of shutting it in with 7 d3, and so:

6 ♗b5+!?



This move may be the final nail in the coffin for the 5...d4 variation.

6...♘c6

The alternative is 6...♗d7, but after 7 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 (or 7...♕xd7 8 ♘e4) 8 ♘e4 ♕h4+ 9 ♘g3 ♘xe5 10 ♘f3 White has the advantage.

7 ♘e4 ♕d5

The only challenging move.

8 ♕e2 ♗f5 9 ♘g5!

White pinpoints f7 as the weakest square in Black's position. Now 10 ♗c4 is a threat.

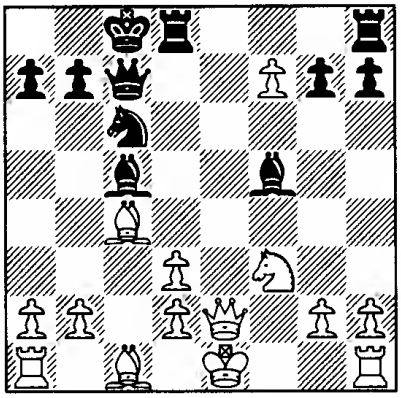
9...♘h6 10 ♘1f3 0-0-0 11 ♗c4 ♕d7 12 ♘xf7!

The only consistent move. If White simply develops, say with 12 0-0, then play could continue 12...♗c5 13 d3 ♖he8 and Black is ready to exploit the knight on g5 with 14...f6. White would then find it hard to prove an advantage. With the game move White wins a second pawn but falls dangerously behind in development.

12...♘xf7 13 e6 ♕c7 14 exf7 d3

Black has to act fast to exploit White's backward development. Of course, if 14...♗xc2? then 15 d3 traps the bishop.

15 cxd3 ♗c5



16 d4!

It is essential to return the pawn to unblock the queenside pieces and prepare the way for castling kingside by challenging the bishop on c5. What saves White is the enormous strength of the passed pawn on f7, which guards the e8-square and so prevents the completion of Black's attacking build-up with ...♖he8.

16...♗xd4 17 d3 h6

Black has no good continuation and therefore plays a quiet move which at least prevents 18 ♗g5. However, White finds an equally effective role for the bishop on e3.

18 ♗e3 ♗xe3

During the game I was worried about 18...♖he8!?, which is perhaps Black's best practical chance. However, White has two winning replies, both of which demonstrate the power of the pawn on f7. The brutal 19 fxe8♕ is good enough after 19...♖xe8 20 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 21 ♗xd4! (but not 21

♕f2 ♖xe3+!) 21...♖xe2+ 22 ♔xe2 ♕f4 23 ♗e3 etc., when the black queen is outgunned by White's big material advantage. Also sufficient is the more subtle 19 f8♕, which deflects the rook and should win after 19...♖xf8 20 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 21 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 22 0-0, when White is a pawn up and the bishop on f5 is awkwardly pinned.

The game move is entirely hopeless for Black.

19 ♕xe3 b5 20 ♗e6+ ♗xe6 21 ♕xe6+ ♕d7 22 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7

The endgame is lost for Black, even though he will pick up the f7-pawn.

23 ♖c1 ♖hf8 24 0-0 ♖xf7 25 ♖c5

Avoiding the trap 25 ♖xc6? (planning a fork on e5) 25...♖xf3!

25...b4 26 ♖fc1 ♖f6 27 d4

Here the simple 27 ♖xc6 wins after 27...♖xc6 28 ♘e5+ ♔d6 29 ♘xc6, but for some reason I didn't want to play the pawn endgame that results after 29...♖c8. Nevertheless, the game move is also decisive. The rest of the game is rather pointless.

27...♘e7 28 ♖c7+ ♔d6 29 ♖xa7 ♘f5 30 ♖a6+ ♔d5 31 ♖c5+ ♔e4 32 ♖e5+ ♔f4 33 ♖xf6 gxf6 34 ♖e6 ♘xd4 35 ♖xf6+ ♔e3 36 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 37 h3 h5 38 a3 b3 39 ♖f3+ 1-0

Game 43

Gallagher-Sorin

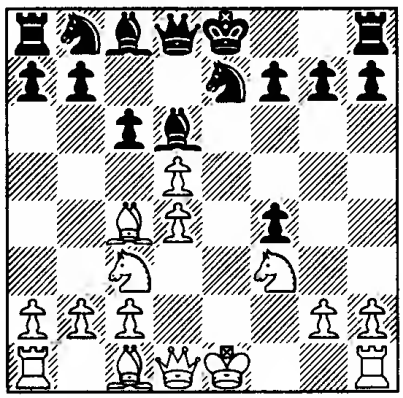
Biel 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3 exf4 5 ♘f3 ♗d6 6 d4 ♘e7

If 6...♘f6 then 7 ♕e2+ is irritating. White has the (very slightly) better endgame after 7...♕e7 8 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 9 ♘e5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xd5+ cxd4 11 ♗xf4 etc., while 7...♔f8 8 ♘e5!, intending 9 ♗xf4, is a good middlegame for White.

7 ♗c4

After the alternative 7 dxc6 ♘bxc6 White does best to transpose to Game 45 with 8 ♗c4 etc. 8 d5?! has also been tried, but this seems bad: 8...♘b4 9 ♗c4 ♗f5 (also good for Black is Valvo's suggestion 9...0-0 10 a3 b5!) 10 ♗b3 ♕b6! (exploiting the weaknesses created by 8 d5 to prevent White from castling) 11 a3 ♘a6 12 ♕d4 ♘c5! 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♔h1 ♗d3! and Black was better in Gallagher-Nunn, Bayswater 1987.



7...cxd5?!

This natural move could well be a mistake. Black should instead simply castle, and leave it to White to resolve the central tension by playing d5xc6. The reasoning behind this is revealed in Game 45.

8 ♗xd5 0-0 9 0-0

Three years later Gallagher reached this position again and tried 9 ♗b3. However, this seems to be an inaccuracy, as Black was able to dispense with 9...♘bc6 and play 9...♗g4! immediately (of course, after the stan-

dard 9 0-0, 9...♗g4? would be answered by 10 ♗xb7). The game continued 10 0-0 ♘g6! and White could no longer continue in normal style with 11 ♘e4 as 11...♘h4 would be an awkward pin. Gallagher therefore chose 11 ♕d3, but was soon in trouble after 11...♘c6 12 ♗d2?! (12 ♘d5, planning 13 c3, safeguards White's centre) 12...♗xf3 13 ♖xf3 ♕b6, when Black won the d-pawn, as ♘e2 allows ...♘e5, picking up the exchange. White battled on but eventually lost the endgame in Gallagher-Barkhagen, Geneva 1995.

Why did the maestro play 9 ♗b3? Did he simply get his moves the wrong way round?

9...♘bc6 10 ♗b3 ♗g4 11 ♘e4 ♗c7 12 c3 ♘g6 13 h3!

Putting the question to the bishop, as Nimzowitsch would say. Here this move proves effective, but in a similar variation with the white bishop on c4 rather than b3 it is a blunder. So be careful! (For the full story the reader is referred to the 11th move of Game 45 below.)

An alternative idea is 13 ♘f2, as played in Hebden-Nunn, London 1987. White aims to attack the f4-pawn as quickly as possible. The game continued 13...♗f5 14 ♘d3 ♘a5 15 ♘fe1 ♘xb3 16 axb3 ♕h4 17 ♕f3 ♖ae8 18 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 19 ♘xf4 ♗e4. White has won a pawn, but Black's two bishops give him considerable counterplay.

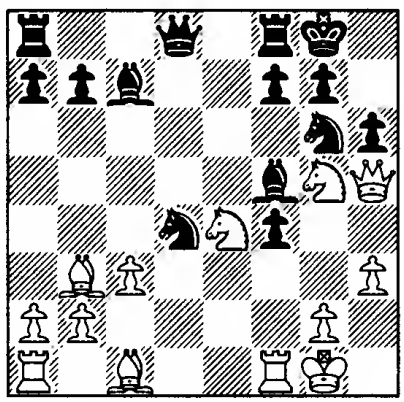
13...♗f5

The bishop relinquishes the pin on one knight and attacks the other, but this allows White to begin a dangerous kingside onslaught. The insipid 13...♗xf3 14 ♕xf3 is simply good for White (he has the two bishops and a strong centre) so the only other move is 13...♗h5. Then White does best to continue 14 ♕d3, planning a build-up with 15 ♗d2 and 16 ♖ae1. (Notice that because the black bishop has been driven back to h5, Black no longer has the option of ...♗f5 in reply to ♕d3, which would have been a very awkward pin.) If Black attempts to play sharply after 14 ♕d3 with 14...♘ge5, then White has 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 16 ♕b5 ♗g6 17 ♘f2 (simplest) and both e5 and b7 are attacked.

14 ♘fg5! h6

The alternative 14...♗xe4 is examined in Game 44.

15 ♕h5 ♘xd4



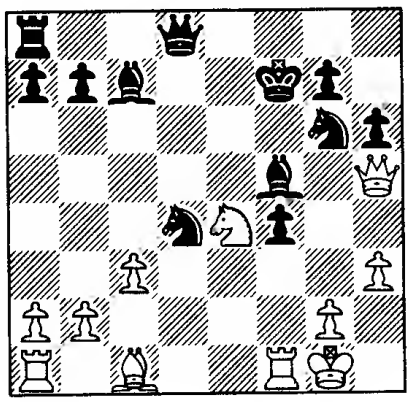
Thus far the game has followed Westerinen-Motwani, London 1988. In this earlier game Black accepted the piece offer with 15...hxg5, but the forcing sequence 16 ♘xg5 ♘h8 17 ♘xf7! ♘xf7 18 ♕xf5 ♕f6 19 ♕xf6 gxf6 20 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 21 ♖xf4 ♔g7 22 ♖g4+ ♔h6 23 ♖f1 left him unable to find a good defence to the white attack, despite the exchange of queens. He

therefore had to enter an endgame material down after 23...♘g5 24 h4 ♘h7 25 ♗c2 ♘e7 26 ♖e1 ♖f7 27 ♗b3 ♖af8 28 ♗xf7 ♖xf7 29 ♖ge4 etc., which White won easily. Sorin tries a more aggressive approach, but unfortunately for him Gallagher was well prepared.

16 ♗xf7+!

An interesting moment. In his book Gallagher gives 16 ♘xf7 first, when 16...♖xf7 17 ♗xf7+ would transpose to the game. Is this just a harmless transposition? Evidently not, as Black can reply to 16 ♘xf7 with 16...♘xb3!?, e.g. 17 ♘xd8 ♘xa1 18 ♘xb7 ♗xe4 and Black has more than enough for the queen. Therefore, 16 ♗xf7+ first seems essential.

16...♖xf7 17 ♘xf7 ♔xf7



18 ♘g3!!

This surprising move was discovered by Gallagher and examined in his book. Here he gets the chance to play his analysis in a tournament game. And it is good for White! I recall that John Nunn once remarked that after writing a book you should try to play any good new ideas in the interval before it is published. The game with Sorin was played in 1992, evidently just before publication of *Winning with the King's Gambit*!

18...♗d3

Black has no good way to continue. After 18...fxg3 (or 18...♕h4 19 cxd4) 19 cxd4 ♕xd4+ 20 ♔h1 ♔g8 21 ♕xf5 ♖f8 22 ♗e3! White defends and remains the exchange up (analysis by Gallagher).

19 ♗xf4! ♔g8 20 ♗xc7 ♕xc7 21 cxd4 ♗xf1 22 ♕xg6 ♗b5 23 ♘f5

Not only is Black a pawn down but he also faces a menacing attack on his king by the white queen and knight.

23...♔h8 24 ♘d6 ♕d7 25 ♘f7+ ♔g8 26 ♘xh6+ ♔h8 27 ♘f7+ ♔g8 28 ♘h6+ ♔h8 29 ♘f7+ ♔g8 30 ♘g5 ♕xd4+ 31 ♔h1 ♗d3 32 ♕f7+ ♔h8 33 ♕h5+ ♔g8 34 ♕f7+ ♔h8 35 ♖e1 ♕d8 36 ♕h5+ ♔g8 37 ♕f7+ ♔h8 38 ♖e7 ♕f8 39 ♖xb7

Black has staved off the mating threats but the loss of a second pawn makes the endgame hopeless.

39...♕xf7 40 ♘xf7+ ♔h7 41 b4 a6 42 ♖b6 g6 43 ♘e5 ♗f5 44 ♖b7+ ♔g8 45 ♘g4 ♗b1 46 a4 ♖c8 47 a5 ♖c1+ 48 ♔h2 ♗d3 49 ♔g3 ♖c2 50 ♘e3 ♖e2 51 ♔f3 ♖b2 52 ♖b6 ♔g7 53 ♔f4 ♔h6 54 g4 ♗b5 55 ♘f5+ ♔h7 56 ♘d6 ♔h6 57 ♘f5+ ♔h7 58 ♖b7+ ♔h8 59 ♘d6 ♗f1 60 ♔g5 ♖d2 61 ♔h6 1-0

Game 44

Gallagher-Keller

San Bernardino 1992

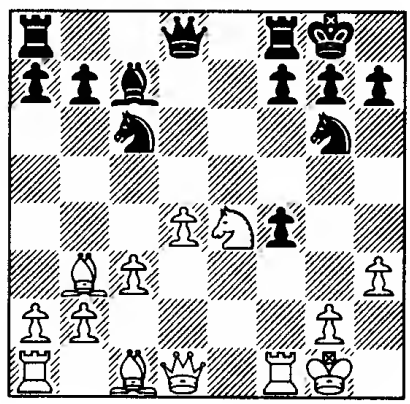
1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3 exf4 5 ♘f3 ♗d6 6 d4 ♘e7 7 ♗c4 cxd5

Again 7...0-0 is recommended here (see Game 45).

8 ♗xd5 ♘bc6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♗b3 ♗g4 11 ♘e4 ♗c7 12 c3 ♘g6 13 h3 ♗f5 14 ♘fg5 ♗xe4

This is the main alternative to 14...h6 of Game 43. It eliminates the immediate tactical threats but amounts to positional submission. After all, Black has the worse pawn structure and he should therefore be aiming for dynamic play with his pieces rather than exchanging off his most active minor piece for a knight.

15 ♘xe4



15...♕h4

No better is 15...♖e8, e.g. 16 ♕f3 ♘h4 17 ♕d3 ♘e5 18 ♕b5 a6 (if Black goes into passive mode with 18...♘eg6 19 ♘g5 ♖f8 then the tactical 20 ♘xf7! ♖xf7 21 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 22 g3 seems to win for White) 19 ♕d5! (forcing Black into a bad endgame) 19...♕xd5 20 ♗xd5 ♘d3 21 ♖d1 ♘xc1 22 ♖axc1 ♖e7 23 ♖e1 ♖ae8 24 ♔f2 ♔f8 25 ♘c5. White has killed off Black's counterplay and he later exploited the black weaknesses on the queenside to win material in Gallagher-Almada, Chiasso 1991.

16 ♕f3 ♘a5 17 ♗d2 b6 18 ♘f2 ♘xb3 19 axb3 ♕g3 20 ♘d3 ♕xf3 21 gxf3!

This recapture looks unnatural, but Gallagher is keen to slow down any black counterplay on the kingside. Thus he avoids 21 ♖xf3, when 21...♘h4! 22 ♖ff1 g5 activates Black's kingside pawn majority, as 23 g3 fxg3 24 ♗xg5 ♘g6 is unclear. As we shall see, in the game White succeeds in breaking through in the centre and queenside before Black's kingside onslaught becomes really dangerous.

21...♖fe8 22 ♔f2

It was more accurate to play 22 ♖fe1 first, as now Black had the chance to generate counterplay with 22...♗d8!?, e.g. 23 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 24 ♘xf4 ♗h4+ 25 ♔g1 ♗g3!

22...a5?

Black misses his chance and is gradually ground down.

23 ♖fe1 f5 24 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25 b4 axb4 26 ♘xb4 ♗d8 27 ♘d5 ♗h4+ 28 ♔f1 ♗g3 29 c4

The white pawns begin to roll and they are three against one. As usual, in a simple endgame the black clump of kingside pawns proves no match for the white majority on the queenside.

29...♘h4 30 ♖a3 ♖d8

Perhaps 30...b5 was the last chance.

31 ♘e7+ ♔f7 32 ♘c6 ♖e8 33 d5 g5 34 ♖d3 g4

At last the black pawns crash through, but it is too late. The white d-pawn will carry the day.

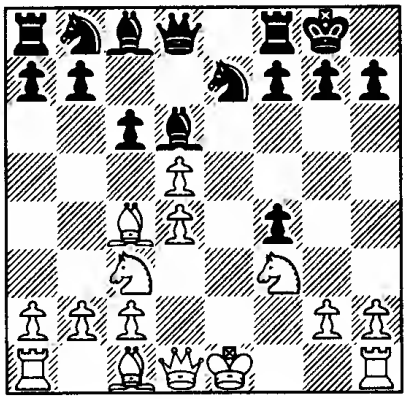
35 hxg4 fxg4 36 fxg4 ♖a8 37 ♘e5+ ♔f6 38 ♗c3 ♔g5 39 d6 f3 40 ♗d2+

White parries the threat of mate and the d-pawn now decides the game.

40...♗f4 41 d7 ♗xd2 42 ♖xd2 ♔f4 43 ♘c6 ♔g3 44 d8♕ 1-0

Game 45
Gallagher-Ong Chong Ghee
Kuala Lumpur 1992

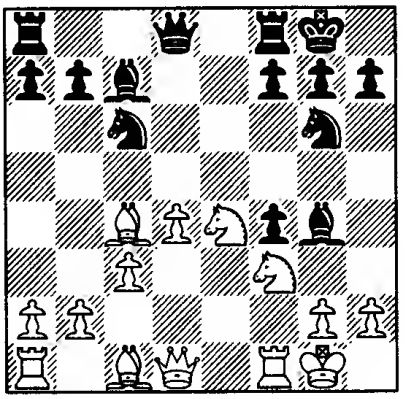
1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3 exf4 5 ♘f3 ♗d6 6 d4 ♘e7 7 ♗c4 0-0!



Black avoids capturing with the pawn on d5 and now White has to play d5xc6 himself, when we transpose to Games 43 and 44 above, but with the white bishop on c4 rather than on b3. Which side does this slight difference favour? Generally speaking, the bishop is safer on b3 than on c4, though less flexible (lacking the option of retreating to the kingside). However, there is an important tactical nuance which has a considerable impact on the assessment of the variation, as we shall see.

8 0-0 ♗g4 9 dxc6 ♘bxc6 10 ♘e4 ♗c7 11 c3 ♖c8

Here 11...♘g6! is almost identical to Games 43 and 44, except that we are one move earlier and the bishop is on c4 not b3.



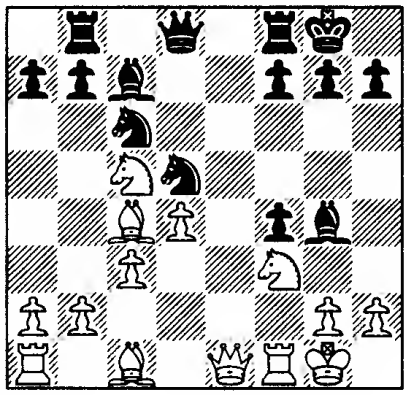
However, as Gallagher points out this makes a vital difference in that 12 h3 (the equivalent of 13 h3 in the previous two games), is no longer playable: White loses a pawn after 12...♗xf3 13 ♕xf3 (or 13 ♖xf3 ♘ge5!) 13...♘xd4! etc. Therefore White is deprived of the plan which proved so effective in the games above.

So how should White continue? If 12 ♕d3 then 12...♗f5 is irritating. White could instead carry out the 'Hebden' plan outlined in Game 43 at White's 13th move. However, Black would be a tempo up on his line after 12 ♘f2 ♗f5 13 ♘d3 ♘a5 14 ♗b3 ♘xb3 15 axb3 ♖e8 16 ♘fe1 ♕h4 etc., which must be important in such a sharp position.

It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that 7...0-0 is more accurate than 7...cxd5.

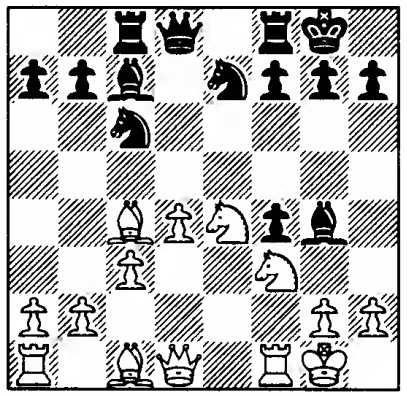
One other alternative should be considered here. In probably the most well-known game in the Nimzowitsch Counter-Gambit, Nunn tried 11...♘d5?! against Illescas at the Dubai Olympiad 1986. It seems very logical to centralise the knight and blockade the d-pawn, but in fact the knight

proves vulnerable on this square. The game continued 12 ♘c5! ♖b8 13 ♕e1! (White hurries to force the exchange of queens as a preliminary to exploiting the weaknesses in Black's pawn structure)



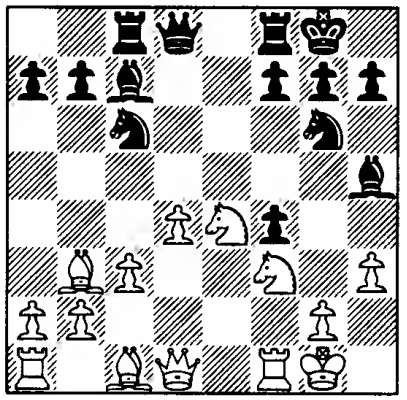
13...♖e8 (for 13...g5 see below) 14 ♕h4 ♕xh4 15 ♘xh4 ♘e3 16 ♗xe3 ♖xe3 17 ♖ae1 ♖xe1 18 ♖xe1 and White had a clear edge, as his queenside pawns far outweigh Black's stunted majority on the kingside. Illescas has suggested 13...g5 as an improvement. This is certainly more in the spirit of the opening, as Black seeks to prove that his kingside pawns have dynamic potential. However, Black seems to be busted after 14 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♘e4 (threatening g5 and a fork on f6, so Black's reply is forced) 15...♗d8 16 ♘fxg5! ♗xg5. Mikhalchishin now suggested that 17 ♗xf4 was unclear in *New in Chess*, but the Fritz program took only seconds to discover the killer move 17 ♖xf4!!, when Black is defenceless, e.g. 17...f5 18 ♘xg5; 17...♗xf4 18 ♘f6+; 17...♗h5 18 ♕g3 f6 19 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 20 ♖xf6; 17...h5 18 ♖xg4 hxg4 19 ♗xg5 with a decisive attack; or finally 17...♔h8 18 ♖xg4 ♗xc1 19 ♕xc1 f5 20 ♕g5! etc.

In the present game Black makes a radical attempt to exploit the exposed position of the bishop on c4. However, 11...♘g6! remains the most challenging move.



12 ♗b3 ♘g6 13 h3 ♗h5

Here 13...♗f5 is similar to Game 43 except that Black has gained the extra move ...♖c8 since he avoided 7...cxd5 and White played ♗b3 voluntarily. However, this difference doesn't seem to have any significant effect upon the combinative line 13...♗f5 14 ♘fg5 h6 15 ♕h5! etc. It must be better for Black to have his rook on c8 rather than a8, but White still has a strong attack.



14 ♕d3 ♗b6?!

This relocation of the bishop weakens the f4-pawn.

15 ♔h1

Black has no way to undermine the white centre and his bishop is poorly placed on h5. Gallagher now plans to increase his advantage by exploiting his 4-2 pawn advantage on the queenside. Meanwhile, the black majority on the kingside is inert.

15...a6 16 ♘eg5 ♗xf3 17 ♘xf3 ♕f6 18 ♗d2 ♖ce8 19 ♖ae1 h6 20 ♗c2 ♗c7 21 b4!

The beginning of a rapid advance on the queenside.

21...♕d8 22 a4 ♖xe1 23 ♖xe1 ♖e8 24 b5 ♖xe1+ 25 ♗xe1 axb5 26 axb5 ♘ce7 27 c4 ♕d7 28 ♗b4 ♗d6 29 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 30 c5 ♕d8 31 ♗b3 ♕c8 32 d5!

A good example of tactics justifying strategy. Black cannot capture on c5, since the d-pawn runs through to queen.

32...♘f8 33 d6 ♘f5 34 ♕d5 ♕d7 35 ♘e5 ♘g3+ 36 ♔h2 ♕xb5 37 ♕xf7+ 1-0

A model endgame for White in this variation, which should be compared with Gallagher's similar effort against Keller (Game 44).

Summary
After 1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3 cxd5?! 5 fxe5 d4 White appears to have good chances with both 6 ♘e4 and 6 ♗b5+. However, the variations are tricky, so the reader is urged to carefully examine the analysis in Games 41 and 42. Instead, in the main line 4...exf4 5 ♘f3 ♗d6 6 d4 ♘e7 7 ♗c4 Black should play 7...0-0! (Game 45) rather than 7...cxd5 8 ♗xd5 0-0 (Game 43 and 44). The white bishop is then on c4 rather than b3 in the critical variations, which is clearly to Black's advantage.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♘c3

4...exf4

4...cxd5 5 fxe5 d4 *(D)*

6 ♘e4 – *Game 41*

6 ♗b5+ – *Game 42*

5 ♘f3 ♗d6 6 d4 ♘e7 7 ♗c4 *(D)* **0-0**

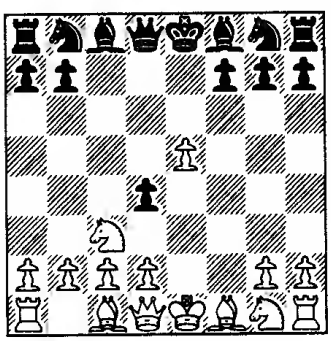
7...cxd5 8 ♗xd5 ♘bc6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♗b3 ♗g4 11 ♘e4 ♗c7 12 c3 ♘g6

13 h3 ♗f5 14 ♘fg5 *(D)*

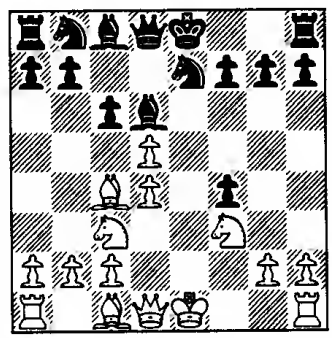
14...h6 – *Game 43*

14...♗xe4 – *Game 44*

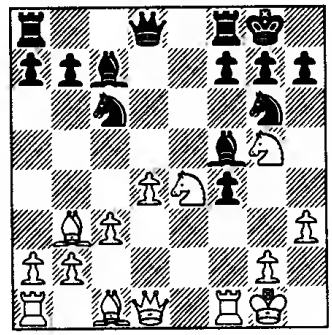
8 0-0 – *Game 45*



5...d4

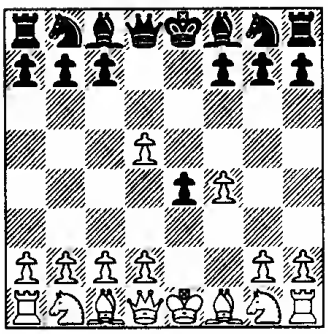


7 ♗c4



14 ♘fg5

CHAPTER EIGHT



Falkbeer Counter-Gambit (2...d5 3 exd5 e4)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 e4

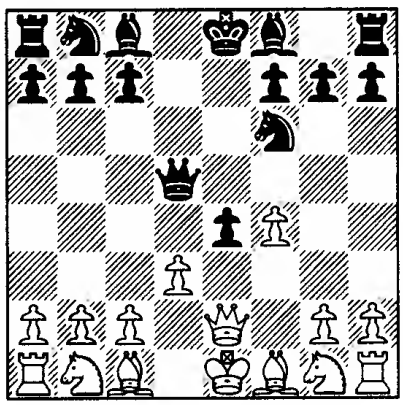
In the Falkbeer Black sacrifices a pawn to seize space in the centre and deprive White of the important developing move ♘f3. However, the e4-pawn, the keystone of Black's strategy, can be eliminated with 4 d3! And although Black then achieves free development for his pieces, the modern verdict is that White has good winning chances. Hence the Falkbeer has become something of a museum piece at the highest levels of chess and we can only give two illustrative games in this chapter. Nevertheless, perhaps it is time for a rehabilitation of this counter-gambit, since Onischuk's play in Game 46 challenges the theoretical assessment of the main line.

Game 46
Jonkman-Onischuk
Hamburg 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 e4 4 d3! ♘f6

This is certainly better than 4...exd3 5 ♗xd3 ♕xd5 6 ♘c3, when 6...♕e6+ (if 6...♕xg2 7 ♗e4 ♕g4 8 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 9 ♗xb7 wins for White. A safer-looking alternative is 6...♕d8, but White still builds up a dangerous initiative with 7 ♘f3 ♘f6 8 ♕e2+! – this is better than 8 0-0 ♗c5+ – 8.. ♗e7 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 0-0-0, threatening to take on h7) 7 ♘ge2 ♘h6 8 f5! ♘xf5 9 0-0 ♘e3 10 ♗xe3 ♕xe3+ 11 ♔h1 ♗d6 12 ♘f4 0-0 13 ♕h5 g6 14 ♘xg6! gave White a winning attack in Murey-Nikitin, USSR 1970. Also good is 5 ♕xd3, holding on to the extra pawn.

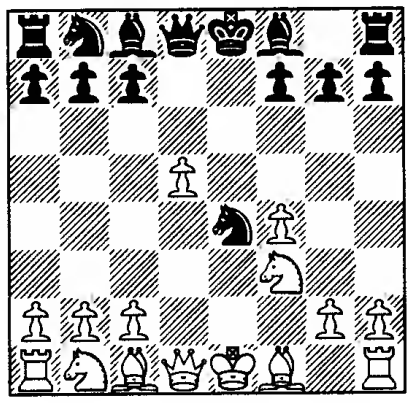
Black's other possibility is 4...♕xd5 5 ♕e2 ♘f6 and now:



a) Gallagher's preference is for 6 ♘d2!? However, in the variation 6...♗g4 7 ♘gf3 ♗xf3 8 gxf3 e3 9 ♘e4 ♗e7 10 ♗xe3 0-0!? 11 ♗g2 ♘c6 12 0-0 (as recommended by Keres) it is not clear how much the extra pawn is worth after say 12...♘h5 13 ♕d2 f5!? 14 ♘g3 ♘f6. The white bishop on g2 looks very miserable.

b) Perhaps 6 ♘c3 is better. Play could go 6...♗b4 (forced) 7 ♗d2 ♗xc3 8 ♗xc3 ♗g4 (again there is little choice, as White planned 9 ♗xf6) 9 dxe4 ♕xe4 10 ♕xe4+ ♘xe4 11 ♗xg7 ♖g8 12 ♗d3! ♘c5. If now 13 ♗c3 then 13...♘xd3+ 14 cxd3 ♘c6, intending 18...0-0-0, is unclear or perhaps better for Black. So White should play 13 ♗f6! to stop Black castling. Then after 13...♘xd3+ 14 cxd3 ♘c6 15 h3! ♗f5 16 g4 (returning the extra pawn to speed his development) 16...♗xd3 17 0-0-0 White will have a virtually decisive initiative against the black king, which is trapped in the centre. For example, 17...♖g6 18 g5; or 17...♗e4 18 ♖e1; or finally 17...♘b4 18 a3 ♗e4 19 ♖h2 ♘d3+ 20 ♔d2 and Black finds himself in a tangle.

5 dxe4 ♘xe4 6 ♘f3



The alternative 6 ♗e3 is examined in Game 47.

6...♗c5 7 ♕e2 ♗f5

Black's two other sharp ideas have been refuted:

a) 7...♗f2+? 8 ♔d1 ♕xd5+ 9 ♘fd2! f5 10 ♘c3 ♕d4 11 ♘cxe4 fxe4 12 c3 ♕e3 13 ♕h5+ ♔f8 14 ♗c4 ♕xf4 15 ♕d5, when the double threat of 16 ♕d8 mate and 16 ♘xe4 was decisive in Réti-Breyer, 1920.

b) 7...0-0? 8 ♕xe4 ♖e8 9 ♘e5 f6 10 ♗d3 g6 11 ♕c4! leaves White a pawn up after 11...♗d6 (or else 12 d6+ will be strong) 12 0-0 fxe5 13 ♘c3 etc.

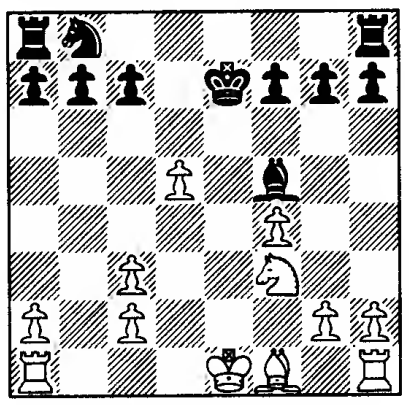
Other moves can be met by normal development, e.g. 7...♕e7 8 ♗e3 ♘d7 9 ♘bd2 etc.

8 ♘c3!

Simple development frustrates Black's plans. The greedy 8 g4? allowed Black a devastating attack after 8...0-0 9 gxf5 ♖e8 in Spielmann-Tarrasch, Ostrau 1923.

8...♕e7 9 ♗e3 ♘xc3

Here 9...♗b4 10 ♗d4 0-0 11 0-0-0 favours White. However, a key position is reached after 9...♗xe3 10 ♕xe3 ♘xc3 11 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 12 bxc3.



White's slight lead in development

and space advantage set his opponent problems. Black can capture the pawn on c2 or go after the d5-pawn:

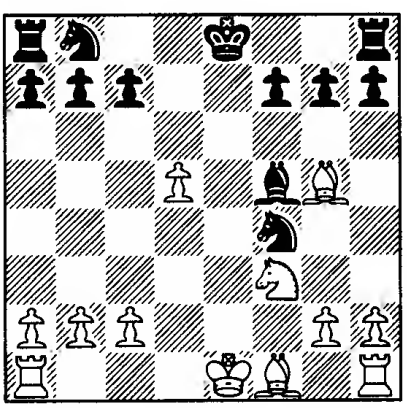
a) 12...♗e4?! 13 ♘g5! ♗xd5 14 0-0-0 (the attack on the bishop is very awkward to meet) 14...♗xa2 (Gallagher refutes 14...♗e6 with 15 ♘xe6 fxe6 16 ♗c4 ♖f8 17 ♖he1 ♖f6 18 f5!) 15 c4 b5 16 cxb5 a6 17 ♗d3 axb5 18 ♖he1+ ♗e6 19 f5 ♔f6 20 fxe6 ♔xg5 21 exf7 and the passed pawn won the day in Foune-Mahieu, Correspondence 1985.

b) 12...♗xc2 13 ♔d2 and now:

b1) If 13...♗g6? 14 ♖e1+ ♔d6 15 ♘d4 ♔xd5? (but 15...h5 16 f5 ♗h7 leaves his bishop shut out of the game) 16 f5 ♗h5 17 g4! ♗xg4 18 ♗g2+ and 19 ♗xb7 wins (Gallagher).

b) However, Black has a superior defence in 13...♗a4!, e.g. 14 ♗d3 ♖d8 or 14 ♖b1 ♖d8! followed by ...♔f8 without shutting in the rook on h8. White can try 14 ♖e1+, but 14...♔d6 is none too clear, e.g. 15 ♘e5 ♔xd5!? 16 ♘xf7 ♖e8. Black is therefore probably defending satisfactorily in this variation. However, he has to grovel and has very few winning chances.

10 ♗xc5 ♘xe2 11 ♗xe7 ♘xf4 12 ♗g5



A highly interesting moment. The famous game Bronstein-Tal, Riga 1968, went 12 ♗a3 ♘d7? 13 0-0-0 ♗e4 14 ♘g5 (Keres believes that 14 ♖e1 f5 15 ♘g5 may be even stronger) 14...♗xd5 15 g3!! and Black was wiped out by some Bronstein magic. Keres recommends 12...♘xd5 13 0-0-0 ♗e6! as the best defence. Black does seem to have enough defensive resources here, e.g. 14 ♘g5 ♘d7 15 ♖e1 0-0-0 16 ♘xe6 ♖de8! (keeping the extra pawn) 17 ♗c4 fxe6 18 ♖hf1 ♘7f6. White has the two bishops and pressure, but a pawn is a lot of consolation. A similar possibility is 14 ♗b5+ c6 15 ♖he1 ♘d7 16 ♘g5 0-0-0 17 ♘xe6 fxe6 and, since 18 ♖xe6? loses to 18...♘c7, again Black holds on to his e-pawn.

White's 12th move in the main game is also supposed to be strong, but Onischuk shows that here too Black has adequate chances.

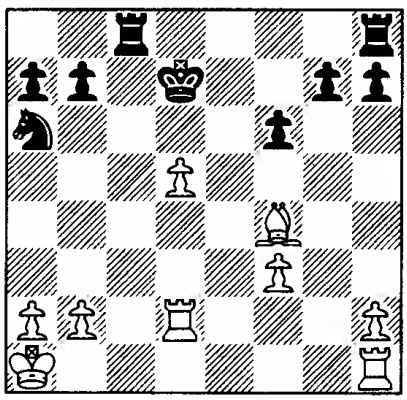
12...♘xd5 13 0-0-0 ♗e6! 14 ♗c4 c6 15 ♗xd5?!

White gives up his bishop to force a passed pawn. At first glance, this seems an excellent idea, but the endgame that results is by no means worse for Black. The alternative was 15 ♖he1!?, with similar play to variations after 12 ♗a3 examined in the previous note.

15...cxd5 16 c4 ♘a6! 17 cxd5 ♖c8+ 18 ♔b1 ♗f5+ 19 ♔a1 f6 20 ♗f4 ♗g4! 21 ♖d2 ♗xf3 22 gxf3 ♔d7

The dust has settled and Black has the better endgame: the white passed pawn is vulnerable and well blockaded by the black king. Meanwhile, the white king is a long way from the centre, which is usually a bad sign in the

endgame. The black rook on c8 is well placed and has a jumping off point on c4 from which to attack White's kingside laterally. White's only trump is his better minor piece. He should attempt to activate his rooks and accentuate the superiority of his bishop over the knight by striving to open lines on the kingside, so an aggressive pawn action on the kingside with 23 h4 and 24 h5 was required. Instead White plays only with his pieces, and soon drifts into a lost position.



23 ♗e3? b6 24 ♖g1 g6 25 ♗d4 ♖hf8 26 ♔b1 ♘c7 27 b3 f5 28 f4

A horrible move which gives away the e4-square to the black knight. The best chance was still 28 h4, planning 29 h5 to break things up and create counterplay.

28...♘b5 29 ♗e5 ♘c3+ 30 ♔b2

The rook endgame after 30 ♗xc3 ♖xc3 is lost in view of the weaknesses on d5, f4 and h2. If White's rooks were active he would have some survival chances, but this is not the case here.

30...♘e4 31 ♖d3 ♖fe8 32 h4

This is too late as Black can carry out a manoeuvre to undermine the bishop on e5 and block White's kingside attack.

32...♘f2! 33 ♖d2 ♘g4 34 h5

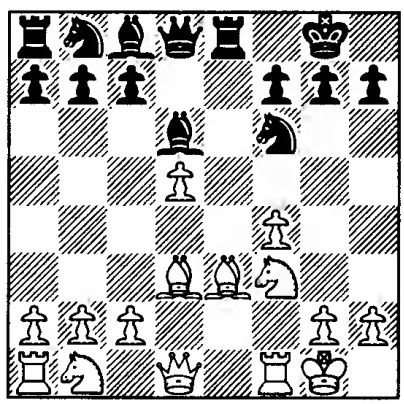
This loses, but 34 ♗d4 ♖e4 would be dreadful.

34...g5! 35 ♖f1 ♘xe5 36 fxe5 ♖xe5 37 ♖g1 h6 38 ♖d4 ♔d6 39 ♖f1 ♖c5 40 b4 ♖cxd5 41 ♖xd5+ ♖xd5 0-1

Game 47
Wells-Lengyel
Budapest 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 e4 4 d3! ♘f6 5 dxe4 ♘xe4 6 ♗e3!? ♕h4+

Black cannot resist the check. An important alternative was 6...♗d6, when play usually goes 7 ♘f3 0-0 8 ♗d3 ♖e8 9 0-0 ♘f6.



Now Glaskov and Estrin claim that 10 ♘e5!? is good for White, giving the continuation 10...♘bd7 11 ♘c4 ♘f8 12 ♔h1. However, we should look more closely at this. The really critical variation is 10...♗xe5 11 fxe5 ♘xd5 (but not 11...♖xe5? 12 ♗d4 ♖xd5 13 ♗xf6 gxf6 14 ♘c3 with good attacking chances) and now:

a) 12 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 13 ♕h5+ ♔g8 14 ♕xf7+ ♔h7 15 ♕h5+, when White has

perpetual check but nothing more.

b) 12 ♕h5 g6 13 ♕h6!? (13 ♕f3 ♘xe3! 14 ♕xe3 – the check on f7 is nothing – 14...♘c6 is better for Black) 13...♘xe3 14 ♖xf7! ♔xf7 15 ♕xh7+ ♔e6 16 ♕xg6+ ♔xe5 17 ♘d2 looks very dangerous for the exposed black king.

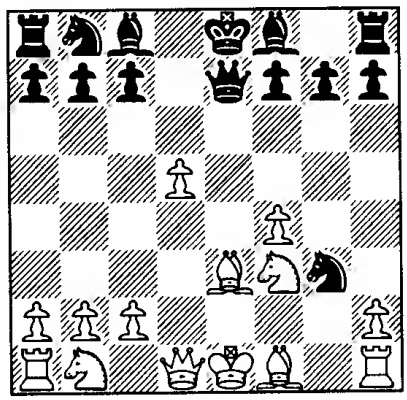
Black could also try the immediate 8...♘f6 rather than 8...♖e8. Then the f7-pawn is nicely defended by the rook on f8. However, White seems to keep the advantage after 9 0-0 ♘g4 10 ♕d2! ♘xe3 11 ♕xe3 ♖e8 12 ♕d4 ♘d7 13 ♔h1 ♕f6 14 g3! Nevertheless, the reader interested in playing the Falkbeer should investigate this further.

7 g3 ♘xg3 8 ♘f3!

In Tal-Trifunovic, Havana 1963, White sacrificed the exchange with 8 hxg3?! However, after 8...♕xh1 9 ♕e2 ♗b4+ 10 c3 ♗d6 11 ♗g2 ♕h6 12 ♗d4+ ♔d8 13 ♘f3 ♗g4 Black had a clear advantage. It is White who will find himself under attack after 14...♖e8.

8...♕e7

If 8...♕h5? the exchange sacrifice is much stronger due to the extra tempo: 9 hxg3 ♕xh1 10 ♕e2 ♗g4 (10...♗b4+? now loses a piece to 11 ♗d2+ ♗e7 12 ♗b4 because the knight is on f3. In the Tal game with the knight still on g1, 11 ♗d2+ ♔d8! 12 ♗xb4? ♖e8 would win White's queen – there is no block with ♘e5) 11 ♘bd2 ♘d7 12 ♗d4+ ♔d8 13 0-0-0 and White was better in Socagin-Alatortsev, USSR 1971. Black will find it very difficult to bring his queen's rook into the game, so White can gradually prepare his assault on the black king.



9 hxg3 ♕xe3+ 10 ♕e2 ♗c5

The immediate exchange of queens 10...♕xe2+ 11 ♗xe2 proved good for White in Spassky-Matanovic, Belgrade 1964.

11 ♘c3 ♗f5 12 ♘h4 ♗g4

Black cannot win the c-pawn, as 12...♕xe2+ 13 ♗xe2 ♗xc2?14 ♖c1 ♗g6 15 f5 wins a piece.

13 ♕xe3+ ♗xe3 14 ♗e2 ♗xe2 15 ♔xe2 ♗c5 16 ♔f3 ♘a6?

This is a serious mistake, after which Black's rook on h8 never plays an active role in the game. It was much better to play 16...0-0 17 ♘e4 ♘d7, when White's space advantage gives him a slight edge.

17 ♖ae1+ ♔f8 18 ♘e4

White's extra centre pawn, more active king and lead in development add up to a big positional advantage.

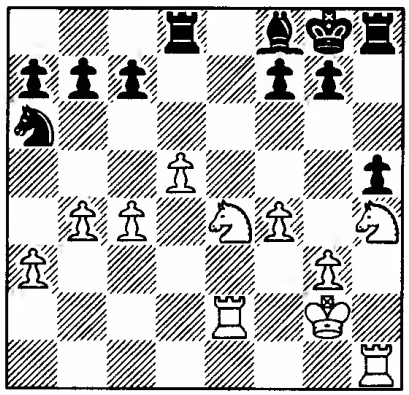
18...♖d8 19 c4 h5

Hoping to get the rook into play via h6, but Black soon changes his mind.

20 ♔g2 ♗b4 21 ♖e2 ♔g8 22 a3 ♗f8 23 b4

Black now has an idle bishop, a rook shut in the corner, and a knight stranded on the edge of the board.

Meanwhile, White has a very strong pawn majority on the queenside, which threatens to advance powerfully. Black's own majority on the kingside is inert.



23...f6?

Even so, there was no reason to give up hope. The one good thing about Black's position was the solidity of his pawn structure. Perhaps 23...c5!? 24 b5 ♘c7 should have been tried. Even though White would then have a protected passed pawn, at least the knight re-enters the game. The ghastly game move lets the knight into g6, when the fight is soon over.

24 f5 ♔f7 25 ♘g6 ♖h6 26 ♘f4 ♗d6 27 ♘xd6+ cxd6 28 ♖he1 ♖d7 29 ♘g6 ♖xg6

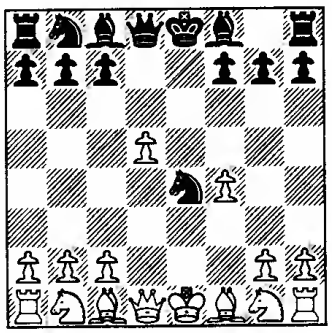
White was planning 30 ♖e7+ with a mate to follow on f8 or a massacre on the queenside.

30 fxg6+ ♔xg6 31 ♖e7 ♖c7 32 ♖xc7 ♘xc7 33 ♖e7 1-0

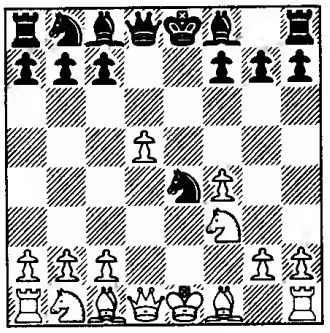
Summary
After 4 d3 ♘f6 5 dxe4 ♘xe4 the theoretical verdict on 6 ♘f3 is disputed by the analysis in Game 46. However, the alternative 6 ♗e3 in Game 47 still looks promising for White. Both 6...♗d6 7 ♘f3 0-0 8 ♗d3 ♖e8 9 0-0 ♘f6 10 ♘e5! and 6...♕h4+ 7 g3 ♘xg3 8 ♘f3 ♕e7 9 hxg3 ♕xg3+ 10 ♕e2 favour White. In the first line Black is facing a dangerous attack on his king; in the second he has to endure a worse endgame.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 e4 4 d3 ♘f6 5 dxe4 ♘xe4 *(D)*

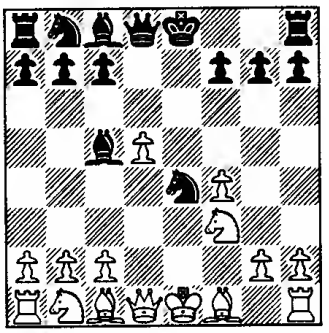
6 ♘f3 *(D)*
6 ♗e3 – *Game 47*
6...♗c5 *(D)* – *Game 46*



5...♘xe4

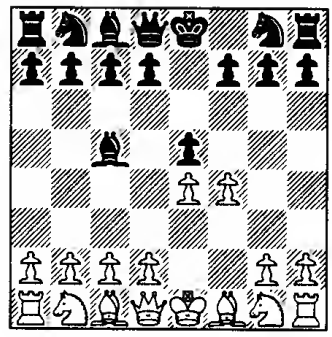


6 ♘f3



6...♗c5

CHAPTER NINE



Classical Variation (2...♗c5)

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5

In the Classical variation Black reasons that White has weakened the diagonal a7-g1 with his rash second move, and so immediately places his bishop on c5, preventing White from castling. White's subsequent play usually therefore centres on his attempts to drive away or exchange this annoying bishop. After 3 ♘f3 d6, White has a choice of strategies. The first is to play 4 c3, aiming to snuff out the bishop with either the advance d2-d4, or as is more likely under the tactical circumstances, b2-b4, so that after ...♗b6, the bishop can be eliminated with ♘a3, ♘c4 and ♘xb6. This strategy is seen at its best in Game 51. However, Black doesn't have to give up his bishop in such a meek fashion, and can play 4...f5!? with sharp play (Games 48 and 49). Alternatively, he can counterattack against e4 with 4...♘f6, as in Game 50. White's second possible strategy is similar in spirit: he plays 4 ♘c3, aiming for ♘a4! to get rid of the bishop in a different manner. In Game 52 Black counters this idea by making a retreat for his bishop with ...a7-a6, but White finds a way to increase the pressure by foregoing castling, while in Game 53 White carries out the ♘a4 idea in tactical fashion.

Game 48
Zoister-Costa
Suhr 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3

In Reinderman-Volzhin, Oakham 1992, White uncorked 3 ♕h5!?, a kindergarten move which actually wins the e-pawn. The game continued in surreal style with 3...♘f6!? 4 ♕xe5+ ♗e7 5 ♕c3 (normal moves leave Black with good play after 5...♘c6 or 5...0-0) 5...♘xe4 6 ♕xg7 ♗f6 7 ♕h6. Five of White's first seven moves have been with his queen! Nevertheless, White is allowed a few eccentricities in the opening. Although Black achieves an impressive build-up, Steinitz would say that a pawn is worth a little trouble. The finish of the game raises just as many questions as the opening: 7...♕e7 8 ♗e2 d5 9 ♘c3 ♘xc3 10 bxc3

♗f5 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 ♗a3! ♕e6 13 0-0-0 (why does Grandmaster Schussler recommend 13 0-0 here, allowing 13...♗d4+, winning White's queen?) 13...0-0-0 14 ♖he1 d4 (why does Black give away a piece?) 15 ♗d3 ♕xa2 16 ♗xf5+ ♔b8 17 ♕xf6?? (this simply allows mate in one) 17...♕a1 mate.

3...d6

Black can also try the aggressive 3...d5. However, Gallagher practically refutes this idea with his analysis: 4 ♘xe5 ♘f6 (not 4...dxe4 5 ♕h5 ♕e7 6 ♗c4) 5 d4 ♗b6 6 exd5 ♕xd5 7 ♗e3 ♘c6 8 ♘c3 ♗a5 (hoping to embarrass White with 9...♘e4, but...) 9 ♗e2! and, since 9...♘e4 fails after 10 0-0 ♗xc3 11 ♗c4!, Black has no real compensation for his pawn.

4 c3

A logical move, preparing 5 d4 to seize space in the centre.

4...f5!?

This is the life or death variation of the Classical. Black launches an immediate attack on e4. It makes positional sense in that White's fourth move has deprived him of the natural response 5 ♘c3, bolstering his centre.

The alternative 4...♘f6 is the subject of Game 50, while 4...♗g4 and 4...♗b6 are considered in Game 51.

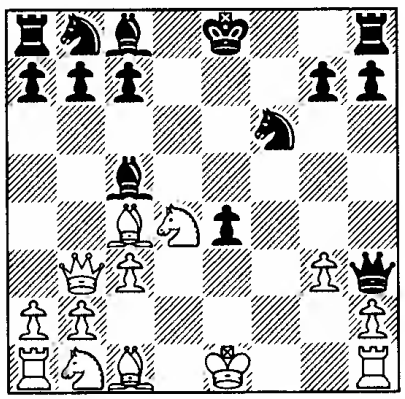
5 fxe5 dxe5 6 d4

An important alternative is 6 exf5, for which see Game 49.

6...exd4 7 ♗c4! fxe4 8 ♘g5

A very natural move which threatens an unstoppable fork on f7, since 8...♘h6 9 ♕h5+ would be very bad for Black. Black is therefore compelled to sacrifice the rook on h8 and has to trust in his lead in development and centre pawns for counterplay.

Nevertheless, Gallagher recommends the more modest 8 ♘xd4! as the way to maintain White's initiative. After the reply 8...♘f6 he analyses several variations in his book, for example 9 ♗g5 ♗xd4 10 cxd4 ♘c6 11 ♘c3! and White has dangerous attacking chances. Black can also try the immediate 8...♕h4+ to disrupt White's smooth build-up. Here are some sample variations after 9 g3 ♕h3 10 ♕b3! (not 10 ♕e2? ♘f6 11 ♗g5 ♗g4 12 ♕c2 ♘bd7 etc.) 10...♘f6:

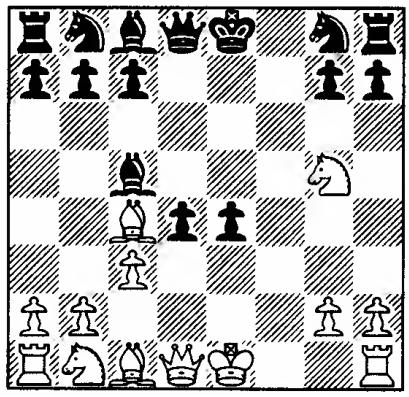


a) 11 ♕b5+? ♘bd7 12 ♘e6 c6 13 ♕b3 (or 13 ♘xg7+? ♔f8 14 ♘e6+ ♕xe6! and Black wins) 13...♗d6 14 ♘xg7+ ♔e7 15 ♗e6 (15 ♖f1 ♘e5 16 ♗g5 ♘f3+ 17 ♖xf3 exf3 is good for Black) 15...♕g2 16 ♘f5+ (or 16 ♖f1 ♘c5) 16...♔d8 17 ♖f1 ♘c5 and Black wins.

b) 11 ♗g5 ♖f8 12 ♘d2 (also possible are overtly aggressive continuations such as 12 ♕b5+ [or 12 ♗e6 ♕g2 13 ♖f1 ♘bd7! etc.] 12...♘bd7 13 ♘e6 c6 14 ♕b3 ♕g2 15 ♖f1 ♕xh2 with unclear play) 12...♕g4 (stopping 13 0-0-0 and attacking the bishop) 13 ♕b5+ ♘bd7 14 ♘e6 c6 15 ♕b3 ♘b6 with a

mess.

c) 11 ♗e3!? ♕g2 12 ♖f1 ♕xh2 13 ♘d2 ♕xg3+ 14 ♗f2 ♕e5 15 0-0-0 and White has a dangerous attack for his three pawns.



8...♘f6 9 ♘f7 ♕e7 10 ♘xh8 ♘c6! 11 ♗g5 ♘e5 12 ♗xf6

In Gallagher-Costa, Biel 1990, White tried 12 cxd4, but his opponent soon had an overwhelming attack: 12...♗g4! 13 ♕a4+ ♗d7 14 ♕b3 ♗xd4 15 ♘c3 ♘d3+ 16 ♗xd3 (16 ♔d2 was the only chance according to Gallagher) 16...exd3+ 17 ♔f1 0-0-0 18 ♘f7 ♖f8! 19 ♕c4 ♗b6 20 ♘e4 ♖xf7 21 ♘d6+ ♕xd6 22 ♕xf7 ♕c5 23 ♗h4 ♕f5+ 24 ♔e1 ♕e4+ 25 ♔d2 ♗a5+ and White resigned.

12...gxf6!

A controversial moment. According to Gallagher 12...♕xf6 13 ♕h5+ g6 14 ♕xh7 dxc3 is winning for Black after both 15 ♘xc3 ♕f2+ 16 ♔d1 ♗g4+ 17 ♔c1 0-0-0 and 15 ♖f1 ♘f3+ 16 gxf3 cxb2, when Black will soon have a second queen. However, White has a much stronger move in 15 ♕g8+!, when after 15...♔e7:

a) 16 ♕h7+ ♔e8 White has repeated the position, the difference being that Black cannot now castle. He could therefore try 17 ♘xc3?, aiming to attack the black king in the centre. Alas, White gets mated first: 17...♕f2+ 18 ♔d1 ♗g4+ 19 ♔c1 (19 ♗e2 ♖d8+ is crushing) 19...♘d3+ 20 ♗xd3 ♕e3+! (the key move) 21 ♔c2 ♕xd3+ 22 ♔b3 ♗e6+ 23 ♔a4 ♕c4+ 24 ♔a5 b6 mate.

b) 16 ♖f1! cxb2!! 17 ♖xf6 and now we have:

b1) 17...♔xf6 18 ♕d8+ ♔g7 19 ♕xc7+ ♔f6 (not 19...♘d7? 20 ♕g3! bxa1♕ 21 ♕xg6+ ♔xh8 22 ♕g8 mate) 20 ♕d8+ with a perpetual, as 20...♗e7? fails to 21 ♕d4.

b2) 17...bxa1♕ 18 ♕g7+ (not 18 ♘xg6+ ♔xf6, but 18 ♖f7+ ♘xf7 19 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 20 ♕g8+ ♔e7 21 ♕f7+ is another perpetual check) 18...♔d8 19 ♕g8+ ♔d7 and since 20 ♗e6+ ♔c6 21 ♕e8+ ♔b6 22 ♗xc8+ c6 seems to lose for White, perpetual check with 20 ♕e6+ ♔d8 21 ♕g8+ is apparently White's best line.

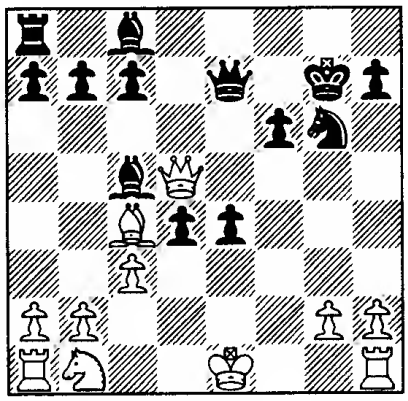
So it seems that a draw is the outcome of 12...♕xf6. Costa's choice in the main game can therefore be seen as a winning attempt.

13 ♕h5+ ♔f8 14 ♕h6+?!

This is too timid. White's chances depend on exploiting the precarious situation of the black king. An exchange of queens should therefore be the last thing on his mind. According to Keres, 14 ♘g6+ ♘xg6 15 ♕d5 gives White a good game, an opinion which is supported by Gallagher. However, after 15...♔g7

see following diagram

Black seems to have tremendous play, e.g.



a) 16 ♕g8+? ♔h6 17 ♘d2 d3 and the connected passed pawns are decisive.

b) 16 ♘d2 dxc3! (not 16...♘f4? 17 ♕xe4 ♘xg2+ 18 ♔e2! ♗g4+ [or 18...dxc3 19 ♕xe7+ ♗xe7 20 ♖ag1] 19 ♔f2! dxc3+ 20 ♔xg2 and Black is lost) 17 bxc3 ♘f4 18 ♕g8+ (18 ♕xe4 ♘xg2+ 19 ♔d1 ♘e3+ 20 ♔e2 ♗g4+ 21 ♔e1 ♘c2+ wins) 18...♔h6 and Black has a winning attack after both 19 ♖f1 ♘d3+ 20 ♔d1 ♘f2+ 21 ♔e1 e3 and 19 0-0-0 e3 20 ♘b3 ♗a3+ 21 ♔b1 ♗f5+.

c) 16 cxd4 ♗b6 17 ♘c3 ♗g4. This critical position seems very good for Black, e.g. 18 ♕xb7 (or 18 0-0 ♖d8 19 ♕xb7 ♖xd4) 18...♖d8 19 ♘d5 ♕d6 20 0-0? (but 20 ♘xb6 axb6 21 ♗b3 ♕f4! is terrifying for White) 20...♗c8! and wins the white queen.

From this analysis we can conclude that Black has excellent chances after 12...gxf6. This implies that the whole variation with 8 ♘g5 should be scrapped as far as White is concerned. Instead, Gallagher's 8 ♘xd4! seems to be the best try.

14...♕g7 15 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7 16 ♗d5

This will prove to be a fatal square for the bishop, but White must attack the e4-pawn. Otherwise (e.g. after 16 ♗b3) Black plays 16...d3 and the connected passed pawns win easily.

16...e3

Black will pick up the knight on h8 whenever he pleases. His centre pawns and attacking chances against the exposed white king soon win material.

17 cxd4 ♗xd4 18 ♘c3 ♗xc3+ 19 bxc3 ♘d3+

White loses his bishop as 20 ♔f1 e2+! is similar to the game.

20 ♔e2 ♘f4+ 21 ♔xe3 ♘xd5+ 22 ♔d4 ♘e7 23 ♖ae1 ♘c6+ 24 ♔d5 ♗d7 25 ♖hf1 ♖xh8

The knight, which has been hanging since move 10, is finally captured.

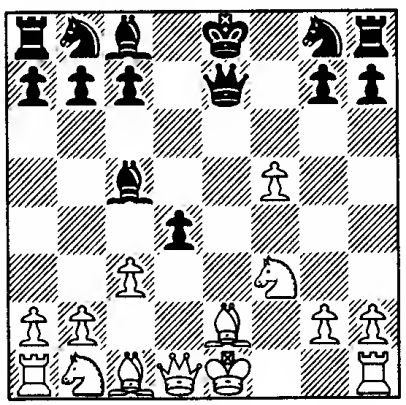
26 ♖f2 ♖d8 27 ♖e3 ♗e8+ 28 ♔c5 ♘e5 29 ♖g3+ 0-1

Game 49
Day-Costa
Manila 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6 4 c3 f5 5 fxe5 dxe5 6 exf5

An attempted improvement on 6 d4. Note that 6...e4? now fails to 7 ♕a4+ ♘c6 8 ♕xe4+.

6...♕e7 7 d4 exd4+ 8 ♗e2



8...dxc3?!

Black should try 8...♘c6!?, taking advantage of a tactical trick rather than developing White's knight on c3 for him. After 9 cxd4 ♘xd4! 10 ♘xd4 ♕h4+ 11 g3 ♕xd4 12 ♗h5+ ♔f8 13 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 Black seems to be at least equal. This may refute 6 exf5.

9 ♘xc3 ♘f6 10 ♗g5 ♗xf5 11 ♘d5

Here 11 ♕b3!? was perhaps more accurate.

11...♕f7?

Black has won a pawn but has allowed his opponent a tremendous initiative. It was better to play 11...♕d6! with unclear play.

12 ♗xf6 gxf6 13 ♘h4! ♗g6 14 ♖c1 ♗b6

If 14...♗d6 then 15 0-0 is strong.

15 ♖f1 ♘d7 16 ♖xc7?!

A simpler way was 16 ♘xc7+! ♗xc7 17 ♖xc7 ♖d8 18 ♗g4! ♕e7+ 19 ♔f2 with a decisive attack.

16...♗xc7 17 ♘xc7+ ♔e7 18 ♕a4!

This is much better than 18 ♘xa8 ♖xa8 19 ♕a4.

18...♖ac8 19 ♗c4 ♘c5 20 ♕b4??

A terrible blunder. White should win after 20 ♕b5!, e.g. 20...♖xc7 (the best chance is to give up the queen) 21 ♗xf7 ♔xf7 22 ♘xg6 hxg6 23 ♕c4+ ♔g7 24 ♕d4 etc.

20...♔d8!

White seems to have overlooked this move, breaking the pin on the knight and so answering 21 ♗xf7 with 21...♘d3+. Now Black succeeds in consolidating and turns the tables.

21 ♕xc5 ♖xc7 22 ♕d6+ ♕d7 23 ♕xf6+ ♕e7+ 24 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 25 b3 a6 26 a4 ♖f8 27 ♖g1 ♖c5 28 ♘f3 b5 29 axb5 axb5 30 ♗e2 ♖c1+ 31 ♔d2 ♖xg1 32 ♘xg1 b4 33 ♘h3 ♔d6 34 ♘g5 h6 35 ♘f3 ♔d5 36 ♔e3 0-1

Game 50
Bronstein-Royset
Gausdal 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6 4 c3 ♘f6

Black makes no attempt to stop White's d2-d4. Instead, he hopes to undermine the white centre after this advance.

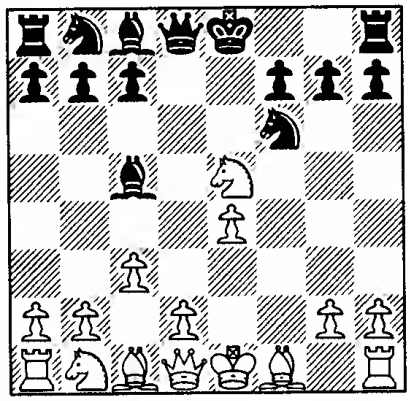
5 fxe5

A critical alternative is 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ (or 6...♗b6 7 ♘c3 0-0 8 e5 dxe5 9 fxe5 ♘d5 10 ♗g5 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 ♕e8 [11...♕d5!] 12 ♗d3 f6. According to various theorists Black is doing well here, but Gallagher shows that White is in fact virtually winning by force after 13 0-0!, e.g. 13...fxg5?! 14 ♘xg5 ♗e6 15 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 16 ♕h5! and it is all over) 7 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 8 ♘bxd2 ♕e7 9 ♗d3 0-0 (9...♘xe4 10 ♘xe4 d5 is a better try, though the game move sets a clever trap) and now 10 ♕e2 is pleasant for White according to Gallagher. Instead, in the game Gallagher-Dzevan, Royan 1989, White fell for it with 10 0-0?! ♘d5!, when he had to bail out with the horrible looking 11 exd5 ♕e3+ 12 ♔h1 ♕xd3, though after 13 ♖c1 White won in only another ten moves (just how does Joe do it?).

5...dxe5 6 ♘xe5

In Zso.Polgar-G.Flear, Brussels 1987, White played in speculative style, sacrificing a pawn rather than snatching one: 6 d4 exd4 7 cxd4 ♗b4+ 8 ♗d2 ♕e7 9 ♗d3!? ♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 ♕xe4+ 11 ♔f2 ♗xd2 12 ♘bxd2 and now, according to Flear, Black should play 12...♕d5! with an unclear posi-

tion after 13 ♖e1+ ♗e6 14 ♖e5 ♕d6, as 15 d5?! ♘d7! is good for Black.



6...0-0 7 d4 ♘xe4?

The correct path was 7...♗d6 with fairly equal chances after 8 ♘f3 ♘xe4 9 ♗d3 ♖e8 10 0-0 etc., as in Tartakower-Schlechter, St Petersburg 1909.

8 ♕d3!

Instead 8 ♘f3 ♗d6 would transpose to the Tartakower game mentioned in the last note. Bronstein prefers to win material despite the temporary discomfort. Ultimately, the black king will prove more exposed than White's.

8...♕h4+ 9 g3 ♘xg3 10 ♕xg3 ♕e4+ 11 ♔f2

A simple enough route to victory was 11 ♔d2 ♕xh1 12 ♗g2 ♕g1 13 ♘f3 ♗d6 14 ♘xg1 ♗xg3 15 hxg3, but Bronstein sees that he can win by direct attack.

11...♕xh1 12 ♗h6 g6 13 dxc5

Some care is required, since 13 ♕h4, with the seemingly decisive threat of 14 ♕f6, fails to 13 ♕h4 ♗e7! 14 ♕xe7 ♕xh2+ etc.

13...♖e8 14 ♕f4 ♗f5 15 ♗c4 ♘c6

Instead, 15...♖e7 would have held on longer, but White had many decisive moves, e.g. 16 ♗g5.

16 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 17 ♕h4!

Now there is no good answer to the threat of 18 ♕f6+.

17...♕xh2+ 18 ♕xh2 ♘xe5 19 ♗xe8?!

Here 19 ♕h4 wins instantly, e.g. 19...♘g4+ (Black has to prevent mate on f6 and 19...♘xf7 20 ♕f6+ ♔g8 21 ♕g7 is also mate) 20 ♔g1 ♖e2 21 ♘d2 and Black is a queen down for the exchange.

19...♘g4+ 20 ♔g3 ♘xh2 21 ♗a4 ♘g4 22 ♗f4 ♖d8 23 ♘d2 ♖d3+ 24 ♘f3 h5 25 ♖e1 h4+ 26 ♔g2 h3+ 27 ♔g3 h2 28 ♗c2 g5 29 ♗xd3 1-0

Game 51
Spassky-Martinez
Oviedo 1991

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6 4 c3 ♗g4

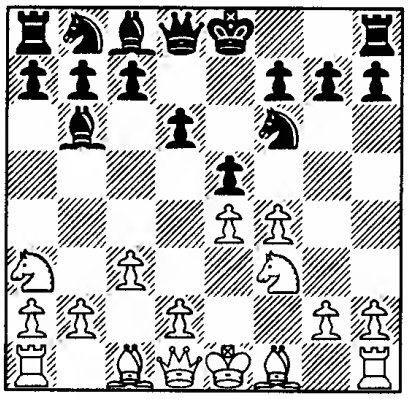
This move has a bad reputation, though it may appear eminently logical to dissuade White from playing 5 d4 by pinning the knight.

An important alternative is 4...♗b6!, hoping to cajole White into the premature 5 d4?!, when 5...exd4 6 cxd4 ♗g4 is good for Black. The natural response is 5 ♘a3 with the possible follow-up 5...♘f6 and now:

see following diagram

a) The slow 6 d3 provoked the aggressive response 6...♘g4!? 7 d4 f5 in Arnason-I.Sokolov, Haninge 1989. White has now gained the two bishops, but Black's well entrenched knight on e4 frustrated all his attempts for an advantage after 8 h3 ♘f6 9 fxe5 ♘xe4 10 ♘c4 d5 11 ♘xb6 axb6 12

♗d3 ♘g3! (to stop White from castling kingside) 13 ♖g1 0-0 14 ♕c2 c5! 15 ♗f4 ♘e4 16 a3 c4. A draw was soon agreed.



b) The critical move is 6 fxe5 and now:

b1) 6...♘g4 7 d4 dxe5 8 h3 ♘f6 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe4 10 ♕h5! with advantage to White (Gallagher).

b2) 6...dxe5! 7 ♘c4 ♘xe4 8 ♘xb6 axb6 9 ♕e2. Now Gallagher gives 9...♘f6 10 ♕xe5+ ♕e7 (or 10...♗e6 11 ♘g5) 11 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 12 ♗c4 ♗e6 13 ♗xe6 ♔xe6 14 d4 with a superior game for White in view of his better pawn structure, bishop against knight and the vulnerable position of the black king. However, the game Hector-Giorgadze, La Coruna 1995, overturned the assessment of this line. Black played 9...♗f5! and emerged with the advantage after 10 d3 ♘c5! 11 ♕xe5+ ♕e7 12 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 13 ♗f4 ♖c8 in view of the double threat of 14...♘xd3+ and 14...♘b3 (to which 14 ♘d4 is the best defence according to Giorgadze).

5 h3

According to established theory, White is supposed to gain the advantage with 5 fxe5 dxe5 6 ♕a4+! ♗d7 (the only move not to drop e5) 7 ♕c2 ♘c6 8 b4 ♗d6 9 ♗e2 ♕e7 10 ♘a3 a5?! (10...a6) 11 b5! ♘d8 12 ♘c4, as in the game Larsen-Joyner, Birmingham 1951. Spassky's move seeks to acquire the two bishops and a queenside space advantage without the need for any eccentric manoeuvres with his queen. He succeeds, but only after some help from his opponent.

5...♗xf3 6 ♕xf3 ♘c6 7 b4!

White finds a way to gain space on the queenside.

7...♗b6 8 ♘a3 ♘f6?

This is too routine. It was imperative to play 8...a6! in order to prevent White's next move, which disrupts his centre. Then after 9 ♘c4 ♗a7 10 fxe5 b5!? Black would have had satisfactory chances.

9 b5 ♘e7 10 fxe5 dxe5 11 ♘c4 ♘g6 12 ♘xb6

Here is the main drawback to the omission of 8...a6. White has two pieces, a bishop and knight, both clamouring for the c4-square. The 'second best' square for either piece would be miserable compared to c4. So which piece should White put on c4, and which piece is to be disappointed? Well, Black has solved his opponent's dilemma by allowing him to exchange his knight for the bishop and then to put his bishop on its best square with a clear conscience.

12...axb6 13 ♗c4 ♖a4 14 d3 h6 15 0-0

The two bishops and the pressure down the f-file give White a clear advantage. Black finds that he cannot castle (15...0-0 16 ♗xh6! wins a pawn).

15...c5 16 ♖b1 ♕d7 17 ♖b2 ♖a3 18 ♖c2 ♖xc3

This leads to complete ruin, but Black is already badly placed since he cannot complete his development.

19 ♖xc3 ♕d4+ 20 ♕f2 ♕xc3 21 ♗b2 ♕a5 22 ♕f5!

The decisive move. White threatens to check on c8, and 22...0-0 now loses to 23 ♕xg6.

22...♕a8 23 ♗xe5

Black's centre crumbles and his king is fatally exposed.

23...♘xe5 24 ♕xe5+ ♔f8 25 ♕d6+ 1-0

Now 25...♔g8 26 e5 is curtains.

Game 52
Gallagher-Giertz
Suhr 1992

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6 4 ♘c3

This is the main alternative to 4 c3. By the way, I have changed the move order of this game for the sake of clarity, as Gallagher actually played 2 ♘c3 etc.

4...♘f6

It is inaccurate for Black to play ...♘c6 before White has committed his bishop to c4. Thus in Hebden-Lane, London 1987, 4...♘c6 allowed 5 ♗b5! ♗d7 6 ♘a4 ♗b6 7 ♘xb6 axb6 8 d3, when White had the two bishops and a better centre.

5 ♗c4 ♘c6

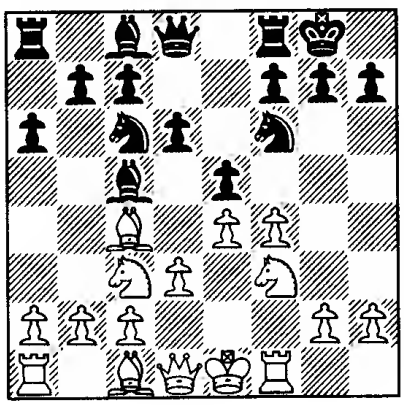
Two episodes from the 1991 Short-Speelman match should be mentioned here (both with Short playing White and transposing from the Vienna). Game 2 went 5...c6!? 6 d3 b5 7 ♗b3 ♕e7 8 ♕e2 ♘bd7 9 ♖f1 ♗b4 10 fxe5 (Speelman thinks that 10 ♕f2 would have been more accurate) 10...dxe5 11 g4 ♘c5 12 g5 ♘fd7 13 ♗d2 a5 14 ♘h4 (this move, attacking f7, is the only good answer to the threat of 14...a4) 14...♘xb3 and a draw was agreed. In Game 4, 5...♗e6 6 ♗xe6 fxe6 7 d3 exf4 8 ♗xf4 0-0 9 ♘a4! gave White some advantage.

6 d3 a6

Black has opened up a retreat square for his bishop, so that 7 ♘a4 is now useless because of 7...♗a7. White therefore tries another plan.

7 ♖f1 0-0?

It is almost always wrong for Black to castle early in this variation, as White can clamp down on the kingside with f4-f5! and begin a direct attack. The way to test White's seventh move was 7...♗g4 or 7...exf4, though White should keep the advantage, e.g. 7...exf4 8 ♗xf4 ♘a5 9 ♗g5 ♘xc4 10 dxc4 h6 11 ♗h4 ♗e6 12 ♕d3, as in Bangiev-Malaniuk, Tallinn 1986. Black has the two bishops but the pin on the knight on f6 is unpleasant.



8 f5!

The prescribed move. Already there is no satisfactory continuation for

Black, as the unpleasant pin 9 ♗g5, intending 10 ♘d5, is threatened.

8...h6 9 ♘d5! ♘d4?

This loses by force, so 9...♘xd5 had to be tried.

10 ♘xd4 ♗xd4

If 10...♘xd5 then 11 ♗xd5 ♗xd4 12 f6! breaks up Black's kingside.

11 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 12 ♕h5!

Now Black is defenceless against the threat of g2-g4-g5, which smashes the kingside and even traps the queen on f6 after ...h6xg5; ♗xg5. Black therefore sacrifices a pawn out of desperation.

12...d5 13 ♗xd5 ♗c5 14 ♖f3

An alternative winning idea, since 14 g4 ♗e7 is not conclusive.

14...♗e7 15 ♖g3 ♕b6

The only way to hold on was 15...♔h7, but in any case Black is a pawn down for nothing.

16 ♗xh6 ♕g1+ 17 ♔e2 ♕xa1 18 ♖xg7+ 1-0

Game 53

Rahman-Lodhi

Dhaka 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♗c5 3 ♗c4 ♘c6 4 d3 ♘f6 5 f4 d6 6 ♘f3 ♗g4

The most active move. Black pins the knight and introduces ideas of ...♘d4.

7 ♘a4!

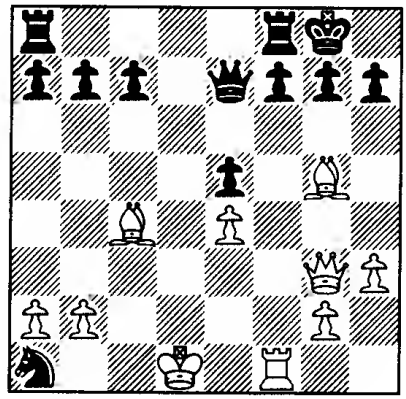
The old move is 7 h3, which leads to a critical position after 7...♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 ♘d4 9 ♕g3 and now:

a) 9...♘xc2+?, taking the bait immediately, seems to be bad: 10 ♔d1 ♘xa1 11 ♕xg7 ♔d7 12 fxe5 dxe5 13 ♖f1 ♗e7 14 ♕xf7 ♔c8 15 ♗g5 ♖f8 16 ♕e6+ ♔b8 17 ♗h6 ♖e8 18 ♕xe5 ♘d7 19 ♕h5 ♘b6 20 ♗d5 a6 21 ♔d2 ♘xd5 22 ♘xd5 ♖g8 23 g4 etc. with a clear advantage to White in the old game Chigorin-Pillsbury, Hastings 1895. This is not totally convincing, but it certainly looks dangerous for Black.

b) 9...0-0! This looks good after 10 fxe5 dxe5 11 ♗g5 (for 11 ♔d1 see below) and now Black has a choice:

b1) 11...♕d6 12 0-0-0 ♘h5 13 ♕h4 ♘f4 14 ♗xf4 exf4 15 ♘d5 (or 15 ♖hf1 b5!?) and now instead of the theoretical 15...♘e6, Black could play 15....b5 16 ♗b3 a5 with a dangerous attack, since the f4-pawn is immune because of a fork on e2.

b2) 11...♘xc2+ 12 ♔d1 ♘xa1 13 ♘d5 ♗e7 14 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 15 ♖f1 ♘xe4!? (15...♔h8 16 ♕h4 is dangerous for Black in view of the threat of 17 ♖xf6) 16 dxe4 and now:



b21) Here *ECO* gives 16...♕d6+ with a big advantage to White. This is by no means clear. Certainly, if he is given just a couple of free moves White will play ♗f6, forcing ...g7-g6, and then ♕g5 and ♕h6 to mate on g7. However, White's own king is so open that Black can generate all sorts

of tactical threats to distract White from his mating scheme. Furthermore, Black has the defensive option of ...♔h8 if necessary.

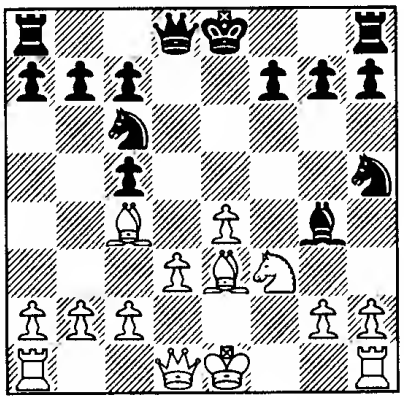
b22) In any case, 16...♕d7+ looks more flexible, with ideas of ...♕a4+ if appropriate. Possible variations after 16...♕d7+ are 17 ♔e2 ♕d4 18 ♗f6?? (18 ♗d3 ♕xb2+ 19 ♔f3 ♕c3) 18...♕xc4+ 19 ♔f2 ♕d4+ 20 ♔e1 (20 ♔f3 ♕d3+ exchanges queens) 20...♕xe4+ and Black wins or 17 ♔c1! ♕c6 18 b3 ♕xe4 19 ♔b2 ♕d4+ 20 ♔b1 with unclear play.

Not surprisingly, your author had no stomach for these variations in the game McDonald-Mikhalevski, London 1992. Back at move 11 (by transposition) I tried 11 ♔d1, but Black was able to force equality with some sharp play: 11...b5! 12 ♗h6 ♘h5 13 ♕xe5 bxc4 14 ♕xc5 gxh6 (14...cxd3 fails to 15 cxd3 ♘g3 16 ♕e5) 15 ♕xh5 ♘xc2! 16 ♔xc2 ♕xd3+ 17 ♔c1 ♕e3+ 18 ♔c2 and a draw was agreed.

7...♗xf3

Black could also consider 7...♗b6, which is not so insipid as it appears at first glance. After 8 ♘xb6 axb6 White should play 9 c3! (less accurate is 9 0-0 0-0 10 h3, as after 10...♗xf3 11 ♕xf3 it may look like White has a pleasant game with the two bishops and better pawn structure, but Black can remove both apparent pluses with 11...♘d4 12 ♕d1 b5! 13 ♗b3 ♘xb3 14 cxb3, as occurred in Regan-Darby, Dublin 1991) when White rules out ...♘d4 ideas and keeps the advantage. For example, 9...0-0 10 0-0 exf4 11 ♗xf4 ♘h5 12 ♕d2 ♘xf4 13 ♕xf4 ♗xf3 14 ♖xf3 ♘e5 15 ♖g3! ♔h8 (Black has no time for 15...♘xc4 because of 16 ♕h6 g6 17 ♖h3 and wins) 16 ♗b3 with the better game for White in Kuijf-Leventic, Mitropa Cup 1995.

Another possibility is 7...exf4 with the plausible continuation 8 ♘xc5 dxc5 9 ♗xf4 ♘h5 10 ♗e3.



Now according to Alekhine his game with Tenner, Cologne 1907, continued 10...♘e5? and White won brilliantly with 11 ♘xe5! ♗xd1 12 ♗xf7+ ♔e7 13 ♗xc5+ ♔f6 14 0-0+ ♔xe5 15 ♖f5 mate. This finish is given in various books.

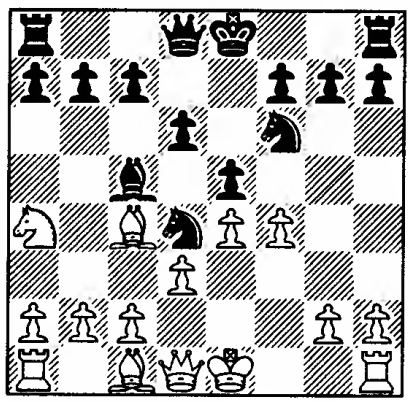
However, according to Tenner, this was all a fabrication by Alekhine. The game actually continued 10...♕e7! 11 ♗b5 f5! 12 ♗xc6+ bxc6 13 ♕d2! fxe4 14 ♘g5 0-0 15 ♘xe4 ♖ae8 16 ♗f2 ♕d6! 17 ♕e3 ♕g6 18 0-0 ♗f3 19 ♗g3 ♘xg3 20 hxg3 ♗xe4 21 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 22 ♕xc5+ ♔g8 23 dxe4 ♕xe4 and a draw was agreed. Also, the game was played in Cologne in 1911, not 1907. This seems to be an instance of Alekhine 'misremembering' his games.

8 ♕xf3 ♘d4 9 ♕d1

An important alternative here is 9 ♕g3. Once again Black has the option of capturing on c2. However, this

seems to be bad, e.g. 9...♘xc2+?! 10 ♔d1 ♘xa1 11 ♕xg7 ♖f8 12 ♘xc5 dxc5 13 fxe5 ♘xe4 14 ♖f1 ♕e7 15 ♗h6! is given by Keres. White stands to win as the natural 15...0-0-0 allows 16 ♕g4+ ♔b8 17 ♕xe4 (but not 17 ♗xf8 ♕xe5!) with a crushing position, e.g. 17...♖fe8 18 ♖xf7 ♕xe5 19 ♕xe5 ♖xe5 20 ♗f4. Instead, Black could try 15...♖d8 but this also loses, e.g. 16 ♕xf8+ ♕xf8 17 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 18 ♖xf7+ ♔e8 19 ♖xc7 ♘f2+ 20 ♔e2 ♘g4 21 ♗b5+ ♔f8 22 e6 etc.

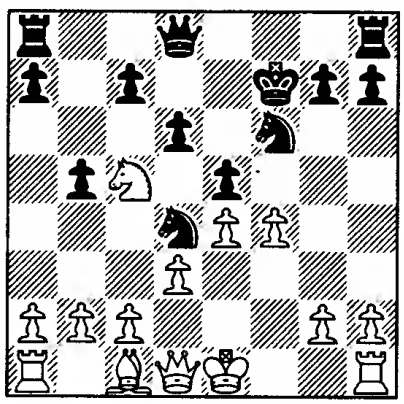
Much better is 9...♘h5!, as given by Ernst. He analyses 10 ♕g4 g6 11 ♘xc5 dxc5 12 0-0 b5 (not 12...♘xc2 13 fxe5!) 13 ♗d5 c6 14 ♗b3 ♘xf4 15 ♗xf4 exf4 and now suggests the piece sacrifice 16 ♗xf7+, leading to equality after 16...♔xf7 17 ♕xf4+ (here 17...♔g7 18 ♕e5+ ♔h6, playing for a win, looks dangerous after 19 ♖f7) 17...♔e6 18 ♕f7+ ♔e5 19 ♕f4+ ♔e6 20 ♕f7+ with a draw. Instead of the piece sacrifice, 16 ♖xf4 is worthy of investigation, e.g. 16...♘xb3 17 axb3 ♕d4+ 18 ♔h1 ♕xb2 19 ♖af1 0-0 20 ♕d7!



9...b5 10 ♗xf7+!?

This piece sacrifice is much more promising than 10 ♘xc5, when after 10...bxc4 11 fxe5 dxc5 12 exf6 ♕xf6 White has to tread carefully just for equality. False trails are 13 dxc4? ♕h4+, when the e4-pawn drops, and 13 c3?! ♘c6 14 dxc4 ♘e5 15 ♗e3 ♖d8 16 ♕h5 0-0, when Black's control of the light squares and the stranded white king gave him a strong initiative in Tischbierek-Mikhalevski, Bad Endbach 1995. The most sensible idea for White is 13 ♗e3, e.g. 13...0-0 14 ♗f2 cxd3 15 cxd3, preparing 0-0, with rough equality

10...♔xf7 11 ♘xc5



11...dxc5

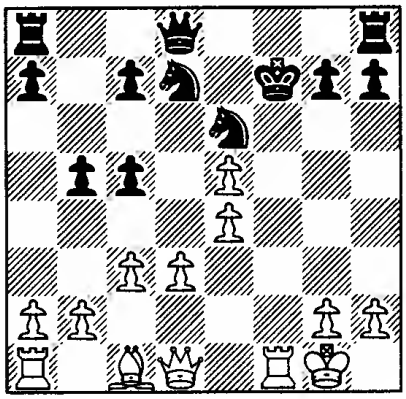
The sacrifice has to be accepted, as 11...exf4? leaves Black disastrously placed on the f-file after 12 ♘b3, e.g. 12...♘e6 13 0-0 g5 14 g3! fxg3? (things were bad anyway) 15 ♗xg5! (unfortunately this sacrifice can't be refused) 15...gxh2+ 16 ♔h1 ♘xg5 17 ♕h5+ ♔e7 18 ♕xg5 ♖f8 19 ♘d4! ♕e8 20 e5 dxe5 21 ♕xe5+ ♔d7 22 ♕f5+ ♔d6 23 ♖ae1 1-0 Lane-S.Jackson, British Championship 1989.

12 fxe5 ♘d7 13 c3 ♘e6

Here Glaskov suggests 13...♘xe5!? 14 ♕h5+ ♔g8 15 ♕xe5 ♕h4+ 16 g3 ♘f3+ 17 ♔e2 ♘xe5 18 gxh4 c4 19 d4

♘d3, but White has an extra passed pawn in the centre, which must give him a substantial advantage.

14 0-0+



14...♔g8

After the alternative 14...♔e8 15 d4 cxd4 16 cxd4 Korchnoi recommends 16...♘xe5! 17 dxe5 ♕xd1 18 ♖xd1 ♔e7 'and Black should hold the endgame'. Instead, 16...♕e7? 17 ♗e3 ♖f8 18 d5 ♖xf1+ 19 ♕xf1 ♘d8 20 e6 was ghastly for Black in Balashov-Matanovic, Skopje 1970.

15 d4 cxd4 16 cxd4 ♘xe5!?

This counter-sacrifice is similar to Korchnoi's suggestion in the last note. Black returns the piece to force an endgame. However, if this was Black's intention it would have been better to do it after 14...♔e8 etc., as then the king would be in the centre. For this reason 14...♔g8 seems to be inferior to 14...♔e8.

The alternative was 16...h6, but then 17 ♕b3 ♕e8 18 ♗e3 looks very impressive for White, though Korchnoi, a renowned defender, describes it only as 'adequate compensation for the piece'!

17 dxe5 ♕xd1 18 ♖xd1 ♔f7 19 ♗e3 ♖hd8 20 ♖d5 a6 21 ♖c1

Bangiev suggests 21 a4!? as more consequent, e.g. 21...bxa4 22 ♖xa4 ♖ab8 23 b4.

21...♔e7 22 ♖c6 ♖d7 23 ♔f2 h6 24 ♔e2 h5 25 h4 ♖ad8 26 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 27 ♖xa6 ♖f8 28 g3 ♖b8 29 b4 ♖g8 30 ♖a5 ♖b8 31 ♖a3 ♖f8 32 ♖d3+ ♔c6 33 ♖a3 ♖g8 34 ♖a5 ♖b8 35 ♖a6+ ♔d7 36 ♗c5 ♖d8 37 ♔e3

White still has all the chances, but after a long struggle Black won.

Summary

After 2...♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6 the strategical plans for both sides are complicated by some very sharp and murky tactical variations. However, some general conclusions can be reached.

In the 4 c3 line, 4...f5 seems dubious after 5 fxe5 dxe5 6 d4 exd4 7 ♗c4 fxe4 8 ♘xd4! etc. (see the notes to Game 48) and the alternatives 4...♘f6 (Game 50) and 4...♗g4 (Game 51) seem poor for Black. However, 4...♗b6!? seems to be adequate, judging from the variation 5 ♘a3 ♘f6 6 fxe5 dxe5 7 ♘c4 ♘xe4 8 ♘xb6 axb6 9 ♕e2 ♗f5! (see the notes to Game 51).

In the 4 ♘c3 line, 4...♘f6 5 ♗c4 ♘c6 6 d3 is standard play. Now 6...a6 7 ♖f1 is interesting, when 7...exf4 or 7...♗g4 should be played, but not 7...0-0 because of 8 f5 (see Game 52). A critical alternative is 6...♗g4 (Game 53).

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 ♘f3 d6

4 c3

4 ♘c3 ♘f6 5 ♗c4 ♘c6 6 d3 *(D)*

6...a6 – *Game 52*

6...♗g4 – *Game 53*

4...f5 *(D)*

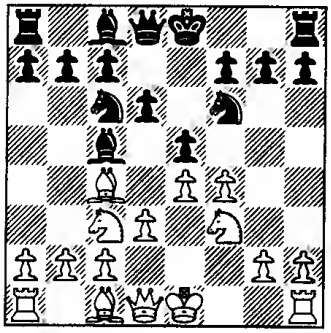
4...♘f6 – *Game 50*

4...♗g4 – *Game 51*

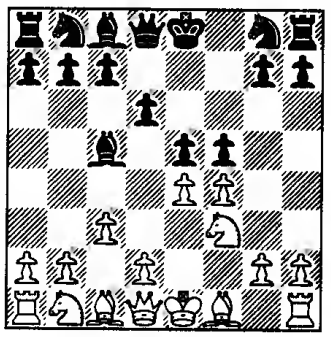
5 fxe5 dxe5 *(D)* **6 d4**

6 exf5 – *Game 49*

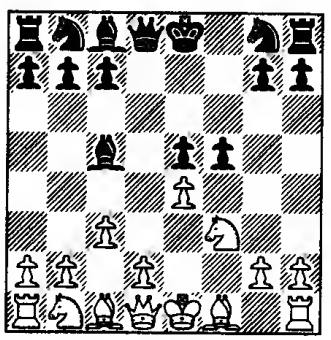
6...exd4 – *Game 48*



6 d3

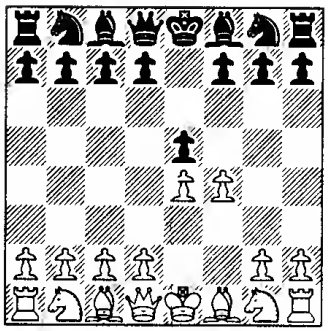


4...f5



5...dxe5

CHAPTER TEN



Second and Third Move Alternatives for Black

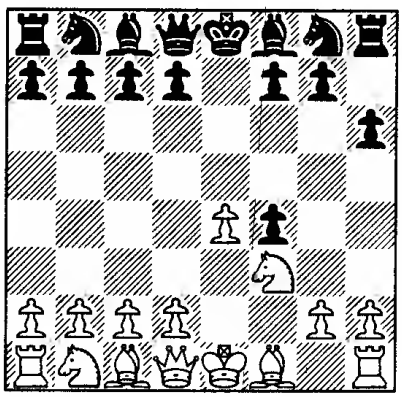
1 e4 e5 2 f4

In this chapter we shall round off our examination of the King's Gambit by looking at divergences by Black from the main lines at move two or move three. The most important of these is 2...exf4 3 ♘f3 h6, the so-called Becker Defence (Games 54 and 55). After 2...exf4 3 ♘f3 Black also has 3...♘f6, 3...♘e7, 3...♘c6 and 3...f5 (Game 56). Other moves are 2...♘h6, 2...♘f6 and 2...♘c6 (Game 57), 2...♕f6 (Game 58), 2...♕h4+ (Game 59). In general, the sidelines given here are favoured by players who want to avoid having to learn all the main line theory. Whether or not they are good enough for equality is a moot point, as we shall see.

Game 54
Gallagher-Juergens
Bad Wörishofen 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 h6

The Becker Defence, which is similar in spirit to Fischer's 3...d6. Black wants to play ...g7-g5, defending the f4-pawn and transposing to favourable Hanstein or Philidor Gambit variations, without allowing the Kieseritzky 3...g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5.



4 ♘c3

After 4 d4 g5 5 ♘c3, 5...d6 would be an immediate transposition to the game. Alternatively, Black could try 5...♗g7 6 g3 fxg3, as in Gallagher-Nunn, Islington 1990, when 7 hxg3 d6 also transposes to the game.

A completely different idea is 4 b3, for which see the next game.

4...d6 5 d4 g5

Here 6 h4 ♗g7! would justify Black's opening. He isn't forced into 6...g4, but can instead solidify his kingside pawn structure with the aim of reaching the Philidor Gambit positions examined in Chapter 3. White therefore adopts a different strategy.

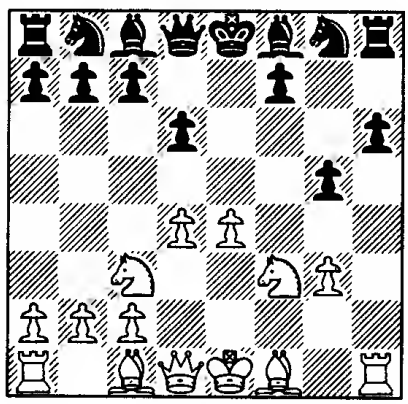
6 g3!

White makes his pawn sacrifice permanent. On the other hand, he gains attacking chances along the f-file and opens up the position in order to exploit his lead in development. So far Black has failed to develop a single piece.

6...fxg3

After 6...♗g7 7 gxf4 g4 8 ♘g1 ♕h4+ 9 ♔e2 g3 10 ♘f3 ♗g4 11 ♗e3 White is better (Bhend).

7 hxg3



A critical alternative is 7 h4, when Gallagher gives 7...g4 8 ♘g1 g2! 9 ♗xg2 ♗e7 10 h5 ♗h4+ 11 ♔e2. Now he claims that White can reach a good endgame, despite the pawn minus, after 11...♗g5 12 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♘e7 15 ♘ge2. This seems correct, but at the beginning the simple 11...♘c6! would be a considerable improvement for Black. Indeed, since the knight on g1 is temporarily paralysed, it would be strange if White stood better here. After 11...♘c6, a possible continuation is 12 ♘d5 ♗g5 (only now) 13 ♗xg5 hxg5, intending ...♘f6 etc., when Black is better, or alternatively 12 ♗e3 ♗g5! 13 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 and White cannot play 14 ♕d2 as it drops the d-pawn.

7...♗g7 8 ♗c4

Gallagher considers that 8 ♘xg5 is interesting in his book, but in this game he prefers not to speculate. In fact, this seems very dubious for White, e.g. 8 ♘xg5 hxg5 9 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 10 ♕h5 ♗xd4 11 ♗xg5 ♗f6! Now 12 ♕h7?? is not one of Joe's better suggestions, since 12...♗xc3+ 13 bxc3 ♕xg5 leaves Black two pieces up for nothing. But in any case I don't think that White has enough for the piece, e.g. 12 ♗c4 ♕e7 13 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 14 ♘d5 (14 0-0-0 ♕h6+) 14...♕xb2 15 ♖d1 ♔f8! and if the knight moves from d5 White has to reckon with ...♕c3+.

8...♗g4

This looks better than Gallagher's suggestion of 8...♘f6, when he analyses 9 ♕d3 ♘c6 10 ♗e3 ♗g4 11 ♖f1 0-0 12 0-0-0 ♕d7 13 ♖f2 etc., as being good for White. In the game Black profitably delays developing his king's knight.

9 ♖f1 ♕d7

The careless 9...♘c6? would be heavily punished after 10 ♗xf7+!, e.g. 10...♔xf7 11 ♘xg5+ ♔e8 (11...♔g6 12 ♕xg4 hxg5 13 ♕f5+ mates) 12 ♕xg4 hxg5 13 ♕e6+ ♘ge7 (13...♕e7 14 ♕g6+ ♔d7 15 ♘d5! wins) 14 ♕f7+ ♔d7 15 ♕xg7 with a clear advantage

to White.

10 ♕d3 ♗h5!

This overprotects f7, thereby preparing to develop the king's knight to e7. He avoids the natural ...♘f6 to take the sting out of an e4-e5 advance by White.

11 ♗d2 a6!

This excellent move rules out 11...♘c6 12 ♗b5! with the threat of 13 d5 and therefore prepares to develop the knight.

12 0-0-0 ♘c6 13 ♘d5

White has completed the mobilisation of his pieces but is struggling to find a breakthrough.

13...♘ge7 14 ♖de1

This loses time in a critical situation. 14 ♖f2, preparing to double rooks on the f-file, looks better. If Black plays to win the d-pawn then there are obscure complications, e.g. 14 ♖f2 g4 15 ♘f4 ♗g6 16 ♘xg6 fxg6 17 ♗f7+ ♔d8 18 d5.

14...♗g6 15 ♗c3 0-0

Castling queenside allows a ♗xa6! sacrifice. Black therefore castles kingside and prepares an attack on White's king.

16 ♕d2

White should still consider the idea of 16 ♖f2, planning either ♖ef1 with play on the f-file or ♖h2 and ♖eh1 with pressure on the h-file.

16...b5 17 ♗b3 a5 18 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 19 ♗d5 ♕d7 20 ♕f2 ♖a6 21 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 22 ♗xa5 d5!

White has broken the phalanx of advancing pawns, but now he finds that Black has fatal pressure against c2. Black now wrenches open the light-squared diagonal for his bishop.

23 ♗b4 ♖a8 24 ♔b1 dxe4 25 ♘e5 ♗xe5 26 dxe5 ♖xc2!!

A spectacular move. Of course, capturing the rook either way loses to 27...e3.

27 ♕e3 ♕d3! 28 ♖f6 ♖e2+ 29 ♕xd3 exd3 30 ♖d1 d2+ 31 ♖xg6+ fxg6 32 ♔c2 ♖d8 33 ♗xd2 ♖xe5 34 b3 ♖e2 35 a4 b4 36 a5 c5 37 a6 ♖d7 38 g4 0-1

Game 55

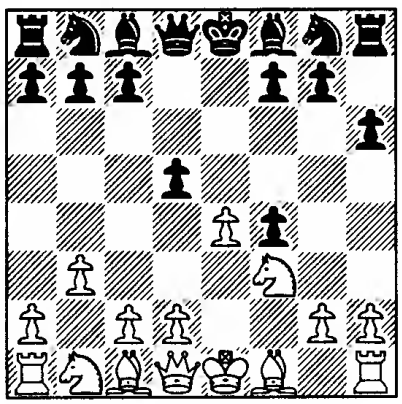
Fedorov-Svidler

European Team Ch., Pula 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 h6 4 b3

This little move disrupts Black's plans, as now 4...g5 can be answered by 5 ♗b2. Black therefore has to change track and seek counterplay with ...d7-d5. Nevertheless, although ...h7-h6 may appear to be a wasted tempo in most of the variations which follow, it should be remembered that it is precisely this move which has provoked White into the 'unnatural' fianchetto of his queen's bishop. 4 b3 cannot therefore be claimed as the refutation of 3...h6.

4...d5



Black can delay this for a move, e.g. 4...♘f6 5 ♕e2 d5. However, he probably didn't want to give White the option of 5 e5!?

5 exd5 ♘f6 6 ♗b2

6 c4, defending the d5-pawn, is well answered by 6...c6 7 dxc6 ♘xc6 followed by 8...♗c5, and White's dark squares are looking sick.

6...♗e7

Black could capture the d-pawn, but after 6...♘xd5 7 ♗c4 his king's bishop is pinned down to the defence of g7, and besides he is unlikely to be able to hold on to the f4-pawn in the long term.

7 ♘c3 0-0 8 ♕e2

White plans to castle queenside and then start a direct attack on the black king. However, Fedorov himself criticises this move and recommends 8 ♗c4 with unclear play.

8...♘bd7?!

The game Hebden-Pein, London 1987 (which incidentally featured the move order 4...♘f6 5 ♕e2 d5 6 exd5+ ♗e7 7 ♗b2 0-0 8 ♘c3) continued 8...♖e8! 9 0-0-0 ♘xd5 10 ♕e5 ♘xc3 11 dxc3 ♗d6 12 ♕h5 and now Gallagher gives 12...♘c6! 13 ♗c4 ♕f6 or 13 c4 ♕e7 as good for Black.

Fedorov must surely have known about this game and Gallagher's analysis of it before playing Svidler. Why did he voluntarily play the 'bad' 8 ♕e2 therefore? Perhaps he has a little trick up his sleeve and intends to entice some future opponent into this line!

9 0-0-0 ♖e8

If 9...♘b6 10 ♕e5! with advantage to White – Fedorov.

10 ♕f2 ♘g4 11 ♕d4 ♗f6

Here 11...♗c5!? 12 ♕xf4 ♘f2 13 ♗b5 ♘xd1 14 ♖xd1 is unclear. White has a pawn and some attacking chances for the exchange. This variation and the comments that follow are based on Fedorov's analysis in *Informator 69*.

12 ♕g1 ♗e7 13 g3

The most enterprising move. White avoids the tacit offer of a draw with 13 ♕d4 ♗f6 etc., and instead opens lines against Black's king.

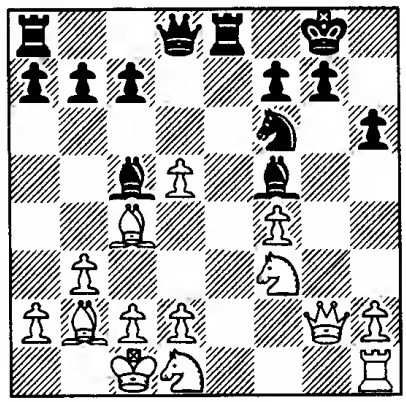
13...♗c5 14 ♕g2

White has to give up the exchange, as 14 d4? is positional surrender: after 14...♗d6 the bishop on b2 is shut in and 15...♘e3 is on the cards.

14...♘f2 15 gxf4 ♘xd1?

It was better to play 15...♘xh1, with complications after 16 ♘e4 f6 17 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 18 ♗c4.

16 ♘xd1 ♘f6 17 ♗c4 ♗f5



18 ♘f2?

And here it is White who misses his chance. 18 ♘e3! was the way to continue the attack. Then if 18...♗xe3 (or 18...♖xe3 19 dxe3 ♗xe3+ 20 ♔b1 ♗xf4 21 ♖g1) 19 dxe3 ♖xe3 20 ♖g1 g6 21 ♕f2 White has a decisive attack in

view of the weaknesses of Black's dark squares on the kingside.

18...♘h5 19 ♖g1 g6 20 ♘e5 ♘xf4 21 ♕f3 ♕h4 22 d4 ♗xd4

Black forces a draw, though he could have fought on with 22...♗d6.

23 ♗xd4 ♘e2+ 24 ♗xe2

Not 24 ♕xe2 ♕xd4 25 ♖e1 f6! and Black wins.

24...♕xd4 25 ♕xf5 ♖xe5 26 ♖xg6+

This leads to perpetual check, as 26...♔f8 27 ♕f6! would be bad for Black.

26...fxg6 ½-½

After 27 ♕xg6+ the black king cannot escape the checks, e.g. 26...♔f8 27 ♕f6+ ♔e8 28 ♗h5+! ♔d7 29 ♗g4+ etc.

Game 56

Reinderman-Huzman

Wijk aan Zee 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6

The Schallop Defence. Black counterattacks against e4 and thereby gains time to defend his f4-pawn with ...♘h5. A sharp struggle ensues, as White is practically forced to offer a piece sacrifice in the main line.

Here we shall take the opportunity to look at some lesser played moves:

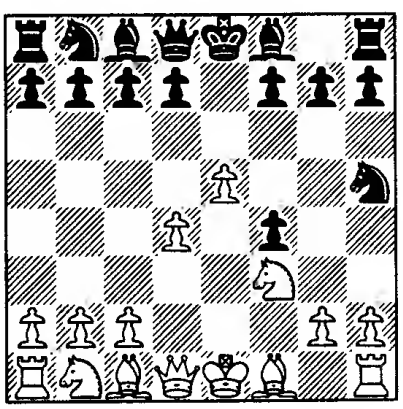
a) First, 3...♘e7 is the Bonsch-Osmolovsky variation. This has been under a cloud since the game Spassky-Seirawan, Montpellier 1985, which went 4 d4 d5 5 ♘c3 dxe4 6 ♘xe4 ♘g6?! 7 h4! ♕e7!? (this turns out horribly after White's unexpected reply, but 7...♗e7 8 h5 ♘h4 9 ♗xf4 was also good for White in Kuznetsov-Bonsch-Osmolovsky, USSR 1962) 8 ♔f2! ♗g4 (8...♕xe4 loses the queen after 9 ♗b5+ c6 [or 9...♔d8 10 ♖e1 ♕f5 11 ♖e8 mate] 10 ♖e1) 9 h5 ♘h4 10 ♗xf4 ♘c6 (Black is in serious trouble as he cannot develop his kingside; he therefore elects for queenside castling) 11 ♗b5 0-0-0 12 ♗xc6 bxc6 13 ♕d3 and White quickly built up a decisive attack.

Hence 3...♘e7 seemed dead and buried, but then Ivan Sokolov discovered 6...♘d5 (rather than 6...♘g6). After 6...♘d5 7 ♗c4 (7 c4 ♘e3) 7...♗e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♘e5 ♗e6 Black had a satisfactory game and even won in the game Riemersma-I.Sokolov, Amsterdam 1995. Perhaps it is time to rehabilitate 3...♘e7.

b) Second, we should mention 3...♘c6. After 4 ♘c3 g5 5 h4 g4 6 ♘g5 this transposes to variations considered in Chapter 3 (the Hamppe-Allgaier Gambit).

c) Finally, 3...f5 seems inferior after 4 e5, e.g. 4...g5 5 d4 g4 6 ♗xf4! gxf3 7 ♕xf3, as in Schlecter-Teichmann, Vienna 1903, when White has a very good version of the Muzio-style sacrifices considered in Chapter 3.

4 e5 ♘h5 5 d4



The quiet 5 ♗e2 contains a lot of

poison, e.g. 5...g5 6 0-0 ♖g8 7 d4 g4? (a blunder, though after 7...d5 8 c4 c6 9 ♘c3 White has a good game) 8 ♘c3 gxf3 9 ♗xf3 ♕g5 10 ♘e4 ♕f5 11 ♗xh5 ♕xe4 12 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 13 ♖xf4+ ♕xf4 14 ♕h5+ ♔g7 15 ♗xf4 and White had a winning attack in Glaskov-Shapoval, Correspondence 1985-86.

5...d5

If 5...d6 then 6 ♕e2! looks best, when if White is lucky Black will play 6...♗e7?? losing a piece after 7 exd6 and 8 ♕b5+. Gallagher says that he has caught two players in this trap, including Huzman, the hero of our illustrative game! Instead Black should answer 6...d5, when 7 c4 should be good for White.

Note *en passant* that 5...g5 is well answered by 6 ♘fd2!

6 ♗e2

Instead of this, 6 c4 is given an exclamation mark by Bangiev. After 6...g5 (6...c6 is safer, though a little passive) 7 g4! White has an excellent game, e.g. 7...♗xg4 8 ♖g1 ♗xf3 (else the g5-pawn drops) 9 ♕xf3 ♘g7 10 cxd5 or 7...♘g7 (best) 8 ♘c3 ♗b4 9 ♖g1 etc., as in Bangiev-Podrezrov, Correspondence 1986-87.

6...g5 7 c4

It is curious that Huzman allows and Reinderman avoids 7 ♘xg5, as this worked out well in R.Byrne-Guimard, Wettheim Mem 1951, after 7...♕xg5 8 ♗xh5 ♕h4+ (8...♕xg2 9 ♕f3) 9 ♔f1 ♗e6 10 ♗f3 ♘c6 11 ♘c3 0-0-0 12 ♘e2 ♗h6 13 g3 etc. Evidently Huzman has found a way to strengthen Black's play in this variation (or else he was bluffing!). In any case, the game move is not bad.

7...g4

After this a highly interesting battle begins. The white knight cannot retreat from f3 without causing disarray in White's position. The question is, can Black find a way to capture on f3 without running into a big attack?

8 0-0 ♖g8

White's powerful centre would outweigh the piece after 8...gxf3 9 ♗xf3 ♘g7 10 cxd5. Black would then find it impossible to co-ordinate his pieces in the face of White's attack.

9 cxd5

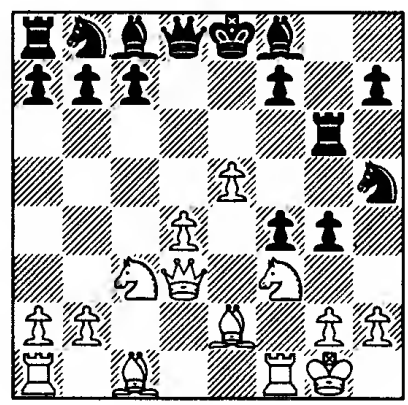
This is forced, as 9 ♘c3? allows 9...dxc4! 10 ♘e4 (10 ♗xc4 gxf3) 10...♘c6, when 11...gxf3 is really a threat (analysis by Huzman in *Informator 56*).

9...♕xd5!

Here 9...gxf3? would still be bad after 10 ♗xf3 ♕g5 11 ♘c3 ♗f5 12 ♕e2.

10 ♘c3 ♕d8 11 ♕d3! ♖g6

Huzman analyses 11...gxf3 12 ♗xf3 ♕g5 13 ♘e4 ♕g6 14 ♖f2 with the makings of a strong assault by White.



12 e6

A visually impressive move, but Bangiev thinks that 12 ♕e4 is better, with the possible continuation

12...gxf3 13 ♗xf3 ♘g7 14 ♘d5 ♗e7 15 ♗xf4 and White has a dangerous initiative for the piece.

12...♗xe6 13 ♘e5!

Clearly better for Black is 13 ♕b5+ ♘c6! 14 ♕xh5 gxf3 15 ♗xf3 ♕xd4+! 16 ♔h1 0-0-0 (Huzman).

13...♘c6 14 ♘xc6?

The only good continuation was to capture the rook. After 14 ♘xg6! hxg6 15 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 16 ♖xf4 ♕g5!?, planning ...0-0-0, the position would have been unclear according to Huzman.

14...bxc6 15 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 16 ♖xf4 ♗d6

Now Black has the initiative. His dark-squared bishop stares menacingly at White's kingside.

17 ♖e4 ♔f8!

Black safeguards his king before going over to the attack.

18 ♖f1 ♔g8 19 ♗d1

The only chance for activity is to challenge the bishop on e6, but the price of this is a second pawn.

19...♖b8 20 ♗b3 ♗xb3 21 axb3 ♕d7 22 ♖e2 ♖xb3 23 ♔h1 g3 24 ♕c2 ♖b4 25 ♘e4 ♖xd4

Now White wins the exchange but runs into a decisive attack. The pawn on g3 will prove a monster.

26 ♘f6+ ♖xf6 27 ♖xf6 ♗e5!

This introduces the idea of back-rank mate.

28 ♖f1 ♖h4 29 ♖e3

Huzman gives the gruesome variation 29 h3 ♖xh3+ 30 gxh3 ♕xh3+ 31 ♔g1 ♗d4+ 32 ♖ef2 g2!

29...♕d4! 30 ♕b3 ♖xh2+ 31 ♔g1 ♖h1+! 0-1

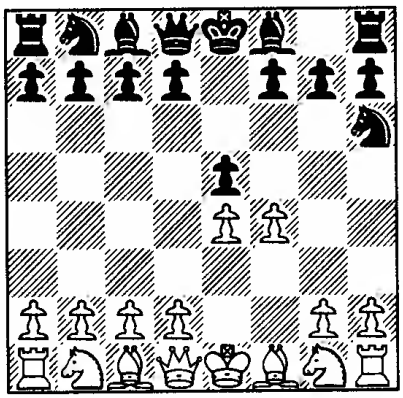
It is mate in two moves after 32 ♔xh1.

Game 57

Gallagher-Bliumberg

Eupen Open 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♘h6?

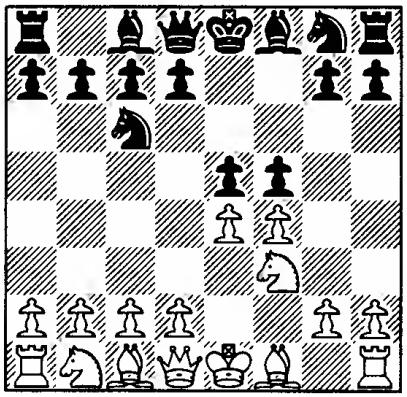


This is certainly one way to get your opponent out of theory! However, White simply develops his pieces, after which the knight begins to look ridiculous on h6.

A more sensible knight development is 2...♘f6, with the plausible continuation 3 fxe5 (it is curious that this is possibly the only time in the King's Gambit that 3 fxe5, when legal, isn't a ghastly blunder: the knight on f6 prevents a killing 3...♕h4+ in reply) 3...♘xe4 4 ♘f3 ♘g5 5 d4 ♘xf3+ 6 ♕xf3 ♕h4+ 7 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 8 ♔xf2 ♘c6 9 c3 d6 10 exd6 ♗xd6 11 ♘d2, planning 12 ♘e4, as in the game Fischer-Wade, Vinkovci 1968. White evidently has some advantage in the endgame, but when I asked Bob Wade himself about the game, he told me: 'The only advantage that White had is that Fischer had kept me waiting the whole day, deciding whether or not to play on the Sabbath. When the game

finally began, I was in no mood for a hard struggle.' *Informator* has yet to invent a symbol for the advantage of a disgruntled opponent!

A more ambitious alternative for Black is 2...♘c6 3 ♘f3 f5!?, seeking to seize the initiative.



Gallagher-Wohl, Kuala Lumpur 1992, went 4 exf5 e4 5 ♘e5 ♘xe5 6 fxe5 ♕e7! 7 ♕h5+ ♔d8 8 d4 (here 8 ♗c4!? is interesting, e.g. 8...♕xe5 9 ♗xg8 ♖xg8? 10 ♕xh7 ♕d5 11 ♘c3 ♕f7 12 ♘xe4 with a clear advantage to White, but 9...g6! is annoying, e.g. 10 ♕h3 ♖xg8 11 ♕xh7 ♖h8 12 ♕xg6 d5!? with complications) 8...exd3 9 ♗xd3 ♕xe5+ 10 ♔d1 ♘f6 11 ♕f3 ♗c5 12 ♘c3 d6 13 ♗f4 ♕d4. White's early aggression has come to nought and now 14...♗xf5 is threatened. Quite possibly a strong improvement will be found for White somewhere in this line, but at the moment 3...f5 looks promising.

3 ♘c3 d6 4 ♘f3 exf4 5 d4 g5 6 h4! f6 7 ♗c4

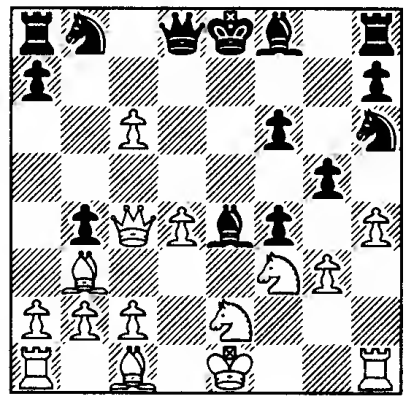
Or 7 hxg5 fxg5 8 g3!, which looks crushing after 8...g4 (if 8...♗g4 then 9 gxf4 gxf4 10 ♗xf4 ♕f6? 11 ♘d5 etc.) 9 ♘g1 ♗g7 10 ♗xf4.

7...♗g4 8 ♕d3 c6 9 g3!

This is still strong.

9...d5 10 exd5 b5 11 ♗b3 b4 12 ♘e2 ♗f5 13 ♕c4 ♗e4 14 dxc6!

The only way, as after any defensive move 14...♕xd5 would be okay for Black.



14...♗xf3 15 c7 ♕c8 16 hxg5! ♔d7

If 16...♗xh1 then 17 gxh6 and there is no good answer to the threat of 18 ♕f7 mate, as the black queen is pinned down by the passed pawn.

17 ♗xf4 ♗d6 18 cxb8♕ ♕xb8 19 ♕e6+ ♔c6 20 ♗a4+ ♔b7 21 ♗xd6 ♕c8 22 ♗d7 ♕g8 23 ♕e7 ♕d8 24 ♕g7

Even stronger is 24 ♗g4+! ♕xe7 25 ♗xf3+ ♔a6 26 ♗xe7 etc.

24...♕a5

It was better to play 24...♖g8, but then 25 ♕xh7 ♗xh1 26 gxh6 looks pretty hopeless for Black.

25 ♗b5+ 1-0

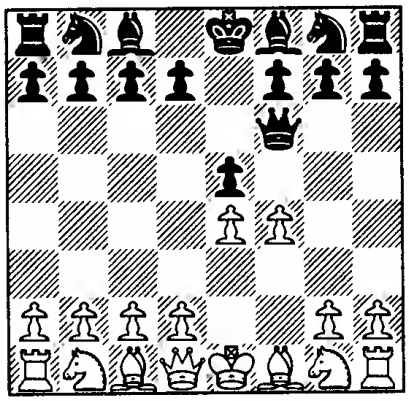
Joe must have enjoyed that a lot!

Game 58

Spassky-David

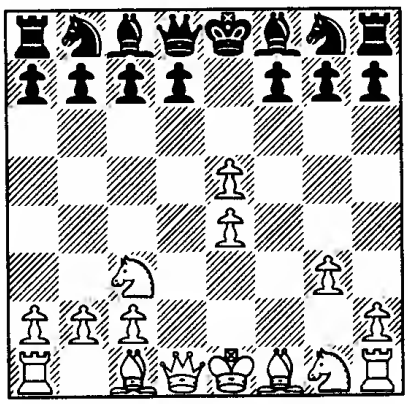
France 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♕f6



Here Black's idea is to accept the gambit without disrupting his pawn structure with 2...exf4. Hence he plans a quick raid with his queen, which will then retreat. The advantage of this line is that Black avoids any weakness; the drawback is the enormous loss of time. As this game proves, White can maintain the advantage even after the exchange of queens. Nevertheless, this is a plucky idea and a good practical decision against someone who knows everything about the main line King's Gambit!

3 ♘c3 ♕xf4 4 d4 ♕h4+ 5 g3 ♕d8 6 dxe5



After six moves only one piece has been developed and Black has all his pieces and pawns save one on their starting squares! It is true that some of White's pawn advances look very ugly, but the fact that these pawns are now out of the way of his pieces means that he can develop a dangerous initiative.

6...d6 7 ♗f4 dxe5 8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9 0-0-0+ ♘d7

At last Black develops a piece besides his queen.

10 ♗xe5 c6

More time has to be wasted in view of the threat of 11 ♘b5.

11 ♘f3 ♔e8 12 ♗c7

This exploits the hole which has appeared in the black queenside structure.

12...♗e7 13 ♘d4 g6

...and now Black finds that he has to compromise his kingside to rule out 14 ♘f5. Clearly his strategy has failed.

14 ♗c4 h5

This allows 15 ♖hf1 to be answered by 15...♖h7. However, Black is gradually falling into a bind as Spassky demonstrates his manoeuvring skill.

15 e5 ♘c5 16 ♗d6 ♘h6 17 b4 ♘e6 18 ♘f3 ♘f5 19 ♖he1 ♘f8 20 ♘e4 ♗e6 21 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 22 exf6 ♘xd6 23 ♖xd6 ♖d8 24 ♖xd8+ ♔xd8 25 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 26 ♘e5 ♔c7 27 ♘xg6

White wins back his pawn, but I have the feeling that he has rather let Black off the hook. As we know, all rook and pawn endgames are drawn!

27...fxg6 28 ♖xe6 ♖h7 29 f7 ♖xf7 30 ♖xg6 h4 31 ♖g4 hxg3 32 hxg3 ♖f3 33 a4?!

After 33 ♔b2 White has good winning chances, as he can push his pawns quickly.

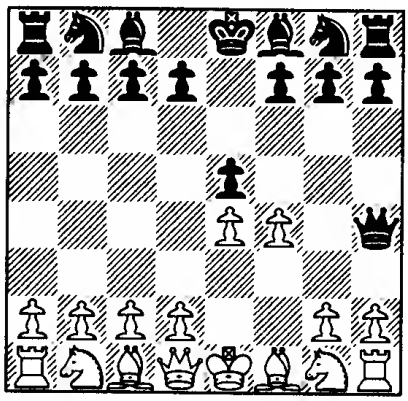
33...♔b6 34 ♖g5 a5! 35 b5

Here 35 bxa5+ would have maintained winning chances. Now Black escapes with a draw.

35...♖a3 36 bxc6 ♔xc6 37 ♖g4 ♔c5 38 ♔b2 ♖f3 39 c3 b6 40 ♔b3 ♖f1 41 ♖f4 ♖g1 42 g4 ♖b1+ 43 ♔c2 ♖g1 44 ♔d3 ♖g3+ 45 ♔d2 ♔d5 46 ♔c2 ♖g1 47 ♔b2 ♔c5 48 ♔b3 ♖b1+ 49 ♔a2 ♖g1 50 ♔b2 ♔d5 51 ♖f5+ ♔c4 52 ♖f4+ ♔d5 53 ♔c2 ♔c5 54 ♔d3 ♖g3+ 55 ♔e4 ♖xc3 56 g5 ♖g3 57 ♖f5+ ♔b4 58 ♔f4 ♖g1 59 ♖b5+ ♔xa4 60 ♖xb6 ♔a3 ½-½

Game 59
Gallagher-Berezovsky
Berne 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♕h4+



This is motivated by similar ideas to 2...♕f6 in the previous game.

3 g3 ♕e7 4 ♘c3

This is the most aggressive attempt to refute Black's opening play. White is prepared to sacrifice a pawn to gain attacking chances.

4...exf4 5 d4! fxg3 6 hxg3

The alternative was 6 ♗f4, when two variations are possible:

a) 6...♘f6?! 7 e5 d6 8 ♕e2! dxe5 9 dxe5 ♘g4 10 ♘d5! ♕c5?! (10...♕d8 11 0-0-0 looks very good for White) 11 ♕b5+! ♗d7 12 ♕xc5 ♗xc5 13 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 14 ♘xa8 ♗c6 15 0-0-0+ ♔e7 16 ♗g5+ and White is winning.

b) 6...d5!? 7 ♘xd5 (for 7 hxg3! see end of this note) 7...♕xe4+ 8 ♕e2 ♕xe2+ 9 ♘xe2 ♘a6 10 ♘ec3 (also 10 ♘xg3 ♗e6 11 ♘xc7+ ♘xc7 12 ♗xc7 ♖c8 followed by capturing on c2 looks better for Black) 10...g2! (to rule out ♗xa6) 11 ♗xg2 c6 12 ♘e3 ♗b4 and Black is probably better. Therefore, White does best to answer 6...d5 with 7 hxg3, transposing to our illustrative game.

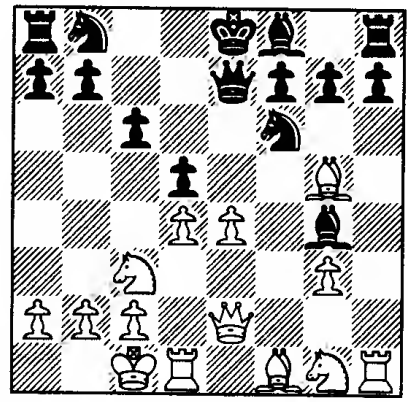
6...d5 7 ♗f4

In 1992 Gallagher wrote of this position: 'I'm looking forward to practical testing.' Well, he didn't have long to wait.

7...c6

A solid move, ruling out ♘b5 ideas. Of course this does nothing to attend to Black's large arrears in development.

8 ♕e2 ♗e6 9 0-0-0 ♘f6 10 ♗g5 ♗g4?



It is a pity that this theoretically

important game is marred by an immediate blunder. Black doesn't see that he is losing material after the series of exchanges which now ensure. The most testing move was 10...dxe4!, e.g. 11 ♘xe4 (if 11 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 12 d5 cxd5 13 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 14 ♖xd5 ♗e7 looks slightly better for Black) 11...♘bd7 12 ♘f3 0-0-0. Black is constricted but can hope to unravel his game, whilst retaining the extra pawn.

11 ♗xf6 ♗xe2 12 ♗xe7 ♗xd1 13 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 14 ♔xd1 dxe4 15 ♘xe4

The bishop and knight will prove stronger than the rook and pawn

15...g6 16 ♘f3 ♔g7 17 ♗c4 b5 18 ♗b3 a5 19 a4 bxa4 20 ♗xa4

Black has made it much easier for White by advancing his queenside pawns. These pawns are now weak and scattered and the hole at c5 is an ideal outpost for a white knight. The remaining moves were:

20...♖a7 21 ♔d2 ♖d8 22 ♖f1 f6 23 ♘c5 ♖d6 24 ♖e1 h5 25 ♖e8 ♘a6 26 ♘e4 ♖dd7 27 ♗xc6 ♖e7 28 ♖d8 ♘b4 29 ♗a8 ♖xa8 30 ♖xa8 ♖xe4 31 c3 ♘c6 32 d5 ♘e5 33 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 34 c4 ♔f7 35 ♖xa5 ♖g5 36 ♖a3 ♔e7 37 ♔e2 ♔d6 38 ♔f3 ♔c5 39 b3 ♖g4 40 ♖a6 f5 41 ♖c6+ ♔d4 42 d6 ♔e5 43 c5 ♔e6 44 ♖c8 ♖d4 45 c6 ♖d3+ 46 ♔e2 ♖xd6 47 ♖e8+ ♔f7 48 c7 ♔xe8 49 c8♕+ ♔e7 50 b4 ♔f6 51 b5 ♔g5 52 ♕c1+ ♔f6 53 ♕b2+ 1-0

Summary

Black's chances in the variations examined in this chapter, with the possible exception of the Becker Defence, are by no means as good as those he achieves by entering the Kieseritzky Gambit. Why should Black be content with a solid, but slightly inferior position? It is perhaps reasonable to suppose that the King's Gambit would be much more popular with White players if the variations in this chapter were to arise more often!

1 e4 e5 2 f4 *(D)*

2...exf4

2...♘h6 – *Game 57*

2...♕f6 – *Game 58*

2...♕h4+ – *Game 59*

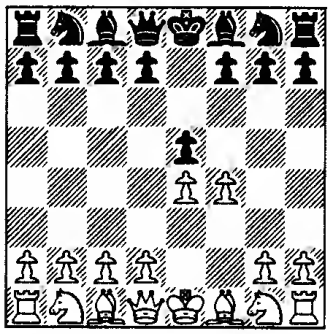
3 ♘f3 h6 *(D)*

3...♘f6 – *Game 56*

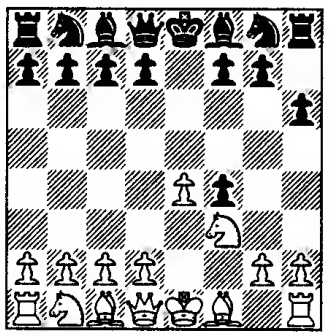
4 ♘c3

4 b3 – *Game 55*

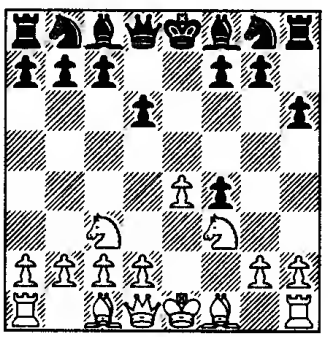
4...d6 *(D)* – *Game 54*



2 f4



3...h6



4...d6

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